The Keepsake

THE

KEEPSAKE

1854

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157

R.Buckner. W.H.Mote.

Lady Beaumont.

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THE

KEEPSAKE

EDITED BY

MISS POWER

FOR 1854.

LONDON:

DAVID BOGUE, 86 FLEET STREET;

BANGS, BROTHERS, AND CO., NEW YORK ; MANDEVILLE, PARIS.

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WITH BEAUTIFULLY FINISHED ENGRAVINGS,

FROM

DRAWINGS BY THE FIRST ARTISTS,

ENGRAVED UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF

MR. FREDERICK A. HEATH.

LONDON:
DAVID BOGUE, 86 FLEET STREET;
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ON THE PORTRAIT OF LADY BEAUMONT.

BY FRANCIS BENNOCH.

GREEN Erin, long abused and torn
  By factions fighting for the sway,
Has still within her spirits born,
  Shall lead her on from night to day,—
From night to day shall lead her on,
  Through faithless friends and open foes;
Bring back her power and glory gone,
  And bind the Shamrock with the Rose.

Her valleys green 'neath sunny skies,
  Shall blessings yet abundant bear;
On patriot sons her hope relies,
  Nor less upon her daughters fair:
Her daughters rare have sterling hearts
  And tangling eyes, each lover knows;
The joy devoted love imparts
  Binds close the Shamrock and the Rose.

And, Lady, he whose name is thine
  Commands a listless senate's ear;
He higher yet shall soar and shine,
  Supported by a people's cheer.
A generous people cheers your Lord;
  And while they faith and love repose,
No power on earth shall rend the cord
  That binds the Shamrock with the Rose.

ST. MICHAEL'S EVE.

BY EDMUND H. YATES.

I WILL tell to you a story, for in winter time we bore ye
With many an ancient legend and tale of bygone time;
And methinks that there is in it enough to pass a minute,
So to add to my vainglory I have put it into rhyme.

As I heard it you shall hear it,—by one whom I revere it
Was told me, as in childhood upon his knee I sat;
It treats of days long vanished, of the times of James the Banished,
Of periwig, and rapier, and quaint three-cornered hat.

Sir Walter Ralph de Guyon, of a noble house the scion,
Though his monarch was defeated still held bravely to his cause,
And foremost in the slaughter by the Boyne's ill-fated water,
Was seen his knightly cognizance,—a bear with bloody paws.

But when the fight was over, escaping under cover
Of the darkness and confusion, to England he returned,
As well might be expected, dispirited, dejected,
But his rage within him smouldered, nor ever brightly burned;

Save when his daughter Alice would say, in playful malice,
That she loved the gallant Orange much better than the Green;
And that as a maid she'd tarry till she found a chance to marry
With one true to William her bold King and Mary her good Queen.

Then Sir Walter's brow would darken, and he'd mutter, "Alice, hearken!
By *my* child no such treason shall be spoken, e'en in jest;
And bethink you, O my daughter! there is one across the water
Who shall one day have his own again, though now he's sore distress'd."

Little knew he that each even, 'twixt the hours of six and seven,
Just below his daughter's casement a whistle low was blown;
And that soon as e'er it sounded through the wicket gate she bounded,
And was clasped in the embrace of one of bold "King William's own."

Ay! De Ruyter was a gentleman, and high-bred were his people;
No chapel-going folks were they, but loved a church and steeple!
His blood of every good Dutch race contained a little sprinkle—
A Knickerbocker was his sire, his aunt a Rip van Winckle;
And so well he danced, and sang, and kissed, and talked so wondrous clever,
He gave this maiden's heart a twist, and conquered it for ever!
And being thus a captain gay, "condemned to country quarters,"
A favorite of his royal lord, adorned with stars and garters,
He saw this young maid,
As one day on parade
He was gaily attired, all jackboots and braid;
He stared, she but glanced,
Her charms it enhanced,
She passed by him quickly, he rested entranced!
No orders he utters,
But vacantly mutters
(Though, clamouring round him, his underlings gabble hard),
"She's to me Eloïsa; to her I'll be Abelard!"

And ever since that hour, whene'er he had the power,
Across to bold Sir Walter's the Captain bent his path;
At the garden gate he met her—upon his knee he set her—
And, vanquished by the daughter's love, forgot the father's wrath.

Till when on the day in question, with a view to aid digestion,
Some retainers of Sir Walter, who with their lord had dined,
Bethought of promenading what in Gamp is called the "garding,"
And, during their researches, what think ye they should find?

But a gallant captain kneeling, and apparently appealing
To a dame who, to all seeming, was encouraging his suit;
All dishevelled were her tresses by the warmth of his caresses,
And her eye with love was *liquid*, although her voice was *mute*.

"A prize! a prize!" quoth these Papist spies—
"A prize for our gallant lord!"
And before poor De Ruyter awoke from surprise
They had pinioned his arms, they had bandaged his eyes;
And when he recovered, his first surmise
Was, "At length I am thoroughly floored!"
For assistance he calls, but they gag him,
And off to Sir Walter they drag him:
While Abraham Cooper,
A stalwart old trooper,
Expresses a hope that they'll "scrag" him.
He conceives it "a pretty idea, as
To think that these Dutch furrineerers
Should come here a-courtin',
On our manors sportin':
A set of young winkers and leerers!"

Sir Walter's brow grew black as night,
He doubted if he heard aright;
"What, to *my* daughter kneeling, *here!*
Methinks thou'rt daring, cavalier,
To venture 'neath the gripe of one
Whose ancient race, from sire to son,
Has ever, e'en in face of death,
Upheld that pure and holy faith
By thee and thine denied!
Or think'st thou that, to bow the knee
And whisper words of gallantry
To one of English blood and birth,
Were pastime meet for hour of mirth?
God's life! before to-morrow's sun
Gilds yonder copse thy race is run;
Nought care I for thy foreign king,
From yon tall oak thy corpse shall swing,
Let good or ill betide."

Away he is hurried,
All worried and flurried,
And locked in a chamber, dark, dirty, and small,—
Huge barriers of iron
The windows environ,
And the door leads but into the banquetting-hall.
That banquetting-hall is soon gaily lit up,
For Sir Walter loved dearly a well-filled cup,—
And sent to invite
Each guest that night,
With "where you have dined, boys, why there you shall sup."

In the banquetting-hall,
Both great and small,

The cavalier knights, the retainers tall,
Together are gathered — one and all.
The red wine has flowed and taken effect
On all, save poor Alice, who *distraite,* deject,
Has refused to take part in this riotous revel,
And wished those who did with the — Father of evil.

The mirth was at its loudest — the humblest and the proudest
Were hobnobbing together, as though the dearest friends;
While some for wine were bawling, there were others loudly calling
For a song, — that ancient fiction which e'er to misery tends;

When Sir Walter grasped the table — rose as well as he was able —
And entreated for a moment that his guests would give him heed:
"'T is St. Michael's eve — a time accursèd by a crime
Committed by my ancestor, — a ruthless, bloody deed!

"For during times of danger, a sable-armoured stranger
One night had roused the castle and shelter had implored;
Much gold he said he carried, and now too late had tarried
To risk the chance of robbers, or to cross the neighbouring ford.

"He was shown into a bedroom, since that period called the Red Room.
(You can see it," said Sir Walter, "for yonder is the door;
And there in our safe keeping the Dutchman now is sleeping;)
But from that room the stranger never, never issued more.

"But throughout this ancient castle, each terror-stricken vassal
Heard shriek on shriek resounding in the middle of the night;
And with the dawn of morning would each have 'given warning,'
But for one little obstacle, yclept the 'feudal right.'

"So no murm'ring e'er was uttered, and old Sir Brandreth muttered
That his visitor had left him as soon as break of day;
But one thing worth attention, Sir Brandreth *didn't* mention,—
He didn't take his armour: there in the room it lay;

"And there it lies at present: but each credulous old peasant
Will tell you that upon this night the spectre walks abroad;
'T is just about his hour, if he really have the power
We now shall see him. Heavens! he enters, by the Lord!"

Bang! clash!
With a terrible crash
Flies open the bedroom door!
And out stalks a figure,
To their eyes much bigger
Than great Gog or Magog, more black than a nigger,
In armour accoutred from head to heel,—
Black rusty old armour, not polished steel.
His vizor is down, but he takes a sight,
Though he moves not his eyes to the left or right;
He says not a word, but he walks straight on,
The hall door opes at his step—he 's gone!
He clanks 'cross the courtyard and enters the stable,
His footsteps are heard by the guests 'neath the table,
For there they 're ensconced, every one.

There, shivering and shaking, they waited till the breaking
Of the day showed that the power of all ghosts was at an end;
Then, one by one uprising, declared it was surprising
That, overcome by liquor, each had dropped down by his friend;

Till the heart of each was lightened by finding that as frightened
As he himself were all by the spiritual sight;
But their courage and their strength coming back to them at length,
They hasten to the prisoner's room, and find it—vacant quite!

Yes! De Ruyter had departed! for while lying all downhearted,
And thinking of poor Alice, he remembered just in time
The spectre-walking legend—he had heard it from a "peagant"
(Excuse this Gampism, reader, but I use it for the rhyme);

And on the instant bright'ning, he proceeded, quick as lightning,
To dress him in the armour which the sable knight had left;
And he listened to the host, till, at mention of the ghost,
He burst upon the drinkers, of their senses nigh bereft.

He called Alice to the stable; then, as fast as he was able,
Galloped off towards his quarters; thence to London hastened on;
There was married to his charmer, thence sent back the sable armour,
And asked Sir Walter's sanction to the good deed he had done.

My tale is nearly ended. Sir Walter, much offended
At the hoax played off upon him, would not listen for awhile;
But regretting much his daughter, came at length to town and sought her,
For he missed her childish prattle and her fond endearing smile.

And then on this occasion a grand reconciliation
He had with young De Ruyter—ever after they were friends.
So, having now related the tale to me as stated,
I take my humble leave of you, and here my story ends.

THE FAIRY WEDDING.

BY ALBERT SMITH, ESQ.

Once upon a time, all the rich Chertsey meadows, which lie between the Abbey River and Laleham Ferry on the Thames, formed a large plain. Old Master Goring, who was an hundred years old the day King William the Fourth opened Staines Bridge—on which occasion he had the honour of being presented to his Majesty—once told me that he could remember when any one could look right away from the Thames to Nettlebury Hole, standing on Laleham Burway, without a hedge or plantation to cut the view. And there was not such a range of grass all about the country; insomuch that the above venerable gentleman, who proved in himself that "the oldest inhabitant" was not the myth he was popularly supposed to be, also informed me he remembered the Royal Hunt once came here, and all the townspeople ran out and left their shops, just as they do now for a balloon descent, or a fight, or a drowning, to see King George the Third, who pulled up his horse and said to his companions, "I always stop to admire these meadows." It was my aged friend's name which once so scandalised our parish in good Mr. Pembroke's time. For when that esteemed minister asked the farmer's daughter who was the oldest man, to test the extent of her serious knowledge prior to confirmation, she answered, "If you please, sir, old Master Goring!" which threw the Sunday-schools into such a flutter, that the children had to

learn an extra hymn every week during the summer, with closed windows, to do away with the district disgrace.

These meadows always had the reputation of being haunted. The notion had originated in the "fairy rings" — the circles of fresh green grass which covered them, and which were always brightly verdant, however scorched up the surrounding turf might be. A few of these still remain ; and the old story, that they were the traces of the fairies' tinkling steps, as they danced round the throne mushroom, is still promulgated, but not credited : the first scream of the railway-locomotive blew away all belief on its puff of steam.

Elsewise I do not know who would have been bold enough on May-night, or St. Mark's Eve, or any other haunted anniversary, to have sat on the banks of the Abbey River, all alone, and asked, in the awful language of the Medium, "Are there any spirits present ?" *I* would n't. Leaving alone the chance of witnessing, in shadows, the dreary funeral convoy of King Henry the Sixth, as it came up this very river in a rude black boat, with a torch at the head, dripping into the sputtering water, and flashing its light about on the blood-clotted features of the murdered monarch, until they appeared to writhe again with his last agony, without monk or mourner, except the pale spectre of his son, which floated in the air in an armour of dull blue light, clouded in half-a-dozen places by the gore from his wounds, as it burst forth in Edward's tent at Tewkesbury ;—leaving alone all this, I say, I should be very nervous. For a very great many people have been drowned in the Abbey River. Some have gone, with nothing more to hope for in this world, on dark terrible nights, to put themselves at once beyond the power of human wrong and agony. Others, stout swimmers, have been pulled down, in the bright summer noontide, by long snake-like weeds that twisted round their legs, and have bubbled up their last breath with the sun dancing on their struggling limbs through

the overhanging pollards. And others, I regret to add, returning with uncertain notions, at night, from Laleham brotherly-love clubs, have mistaken the bridge, and walked cheerfully into the water; cutting short their vocal intentions of drowning care in a bowl, by substituting themselves and the river, in which they have been found the next morning, sitting down at the bottom, with a pipe still in their hands, and, to all appearance, presiding at an extensive free-and-easy of fishes.

More agreeable would be the meadow spirits than the corpse-light visions I should expect on the river. They appear to have been always very well-meaning and grateful little persons, if they were only well treated; but if you put them out, they were terribly mischievous; and this brings me to the fairy rings on the Burway, and how they came there.

Old Sir Reginald Wapshott lived at Redwynde Court, on the pasture still marked out in the old histories of Surrey. The Wapshotts had resided ever since the Conquest, as everybody knows, at Almoners Barns, on St. Anne's Hill, near Hardwicke Court, where Charles James Fox used always to go to the fair, and see the girls dance in the barn, and walk about eating a great brick of stall gingerbread. They had always been excellent people; and none of them ever rose above or sank below the grade of respectable yeomen, through all the civil wars and turmoils that so upset the middle ages, except this Reginald. He had been knighted for some service rendered to the king; and being a fine fellow to boot, had attracted the attention of Dame Blanche Audley, widow of Neville Audley, and daughter of Sir Mark Heriot,— the same Blanche who, when a girl, hung to the clapper of the old monastery bell, still to be seen, with its monkish inscription (as figured in Bray and Manning's "Surrey" by my father), in the bell-tower of Chertsey Church, to delay her lover's execution. So Sir Reginald and Dame Audley were married; and he got fine, and did not mix much with his old

friends; and, perhaps, it was on that account that they said Dame Audley's early energy had turned into ceaseless curiosity and tittle-tattle, and that this would one day bring her husband into trouble. Probably they might have exaggerated it; and, truth to tell, the old lady was rather an inquisitive and scandalous "party;" and, indeed, it is a local attribute to be so: for, from time immemorial, the good folks of Chertsey have always felt such a much greater interest in other people's business than in their own, that it is not astonishing the town stands pretty much the same as it did fifty years ago.

One fine autumnal night the moon was full out upon the bowling-green at Redwynde. It was after curfew time—they ring the curfew even now at Chertsey—and most of the household had gone to rest, except old Sir Reginald, who sat in an arbour drinking malvoisie and pondering on things in general; which is a pleasant kind of rumination, and the very thing for country gentlemen to indulge in, as it involves but little brain-weariness. The night was very fine and very still. Not a leaf was moving, and nothing broke the silence except the plash of the fountain as its bright drops fell into the basin, sparkling in the moonbeams. One by one the lights went out in the windows; and Sir Reginald was thinking of bed himself, when he saw what appeared to him to be a cluster of blue sparks moving across the lawn. They came nearer very slowly, and then he made out that they were glow-worms. In the middle of them, like a shepherd in a flock of sheep, walked the daintiest little person he had ever set eyes on. He was not above three or four inches high, and he wore a little cap made of a foxglove bell. His tunic was a large tulip, put on topsy-turvy, and he carried a stalk of lavender for a staff or wand. With this he directed the movements of the glow-worms, placing some here and others there, until he had distributed them all about the turf banks that bordered the plot, when the ground appeared powdered

with light; and then the drops of water, that fell with various tinkling notes into the basin, appeared to utter most exquisite music, finer and softer than anything the knight had yet heard; and as an accompaniment, every harebell in the garden appeared turned to silver suddenly, and assisted in ringing out a peal of marvellous changes. Whilst this went on, mushrooms of delicate whiteness rose from the turf, always surrounding one larger than the rest; and this grew and grew, until it covered the others, and made a perfect tent, which fresh troops of glow-worms directly edged and spiralled with charming devices, always under the direction of the little chamberlain, who, when he had apparently finished everything to his satisfaction, sat down on a small mushroom and surveyed the arrangements with great complacency.

And now, from every direction, groups of fairies came on to the bowling-green, all exquisitely dressed in the latest elfin fashions, which would require the pen of Mr. Planché to describe, so fanciful and faylike were they. Some of the leading *belles* had fans of butterflies' wings, and wore plumes from the humming-bird; but their robes of moleskin-velvet were more especially admired, above all when trimmed with ribbons of Indian grass and ladybirds, and jewels from the diamond beetles. Amongst the more exquisite beaux might be seen some very absurd dandies. One wore a "What 's-o'clock?" or "Puff-away," on his head, which almost gave him the air of a Kafir chief; and another, in a tight-fitting suit of bats'-wing membrane, with a jay's feather in his hat, looked almost like a rope-dancer, and quite prepared to perform upon the long spider's thread that stretched across the lawn. Two or three had caps of calceolarea petals; and one silly fellow came in a Templar-looking helmet formed of a filbert-husk, worn upside down, with the forepart cut away. But these were mere coxcombs —empty young swells that could be routed with an awn of barley.

They all took their places about on the little mushrooms as they pleased; and then Master Neville saw that it was a wedding. For the bride and bridegroom had places of honour; and the pretty little lady, in a veil of leaf-lace trimmed with thistle-down, looked *à ravir*. They made very merry for a long time, during which the old knight watched them from his arbour with the greatest wonder and admiration; and at last they appeared to have come to the end of the mouse-skins of wine which they brought with them. They squeezed out the last drops and then looked about for more, and finally began to complain of their miscalculation with loud lamentations; for their wine-caves were far off—in the remotest caverns of the Peak of Derbyshire, and the fairies hated to go in there at night on account of the dwarfs, who set all sorts of traps for them. For every hill, as is well known, is inhabited by dwarfs; in fact, it is owing to their spite, for the rout and confusion caused in the tunnelling of Primrose Hill, that the accidents occur on the North-western Railway, where they play such tricks with the switches and signals that the guards and porters have a hard time of it.

Sir Neville thought it a great pity that such festive little folks should be stopped in their mirth for want of wine; and on such an occasion too. So he caught up a bottle of malvoisie, yet uncorked, and threw it amongst them. It came down with a "thug" on the turf, well-nigh smashing two or three of them, and causing great consternation generally. But one of them had seen the quarter that it came from; so, going at once to the summer-house, he discovered the knight, and made an obeisance to him. After which he said:—

"We have never yet allowed a mortal to keep his eyes after they have looked upon our gatherings. But you have a good heart, and have prolonged our cheer; and, therefore, we hope you will join our party."

The old knight could not refuse, there was so much grace and courtesy in the little gentleman's manner; so he took a garden-stool with him and sat down very carefully, for fear of accident, amongst the company. They were all very polite and pledged him repeatedly, and at last they began to dance; and the beautiful little bride herself came up and invited him to be her partner. They were not very well matched as to size, to be sure; but it seemed to make very little difference to the fairies, whether they were on the ground or off it: so, as Sir Neville could not very well stoop down to them, they flew up to him. And then they began to go round and round and round, until the old knight was fain to drop. But they would not stop,—on they went, quicker and quicker, until, all of a sudden, a splash of water came down in the midst of them. In an instant everything was gone,—fairies, glow-worms, banquet, and mushrooms; and the old knight was lying upon the grass in the quiet moonlight, without a trace of the revelry about him, quite bewildered.

But not for long. The sound of the last music still hung on his ear, when it was broken in upon by the shrill voice of Dame Blanche, who was at one of the windows with a large black-jack in her hand, which, just before full of water, she had emptied over the dancers. She had not seen them, for they had all put their caps on, which renders fairies invisible; but she had perceived her husband capering about like a maniac, and believing him to be very far gone in his cups, had taken this summary mode of exacting his attention.

No doubt there would have been an angry dialogue; but just as it was commencing the little fairy chamberlain came flitting through the air, and thus spoke to the lady:—

"We have been very much irritated by your rudeness and meddling—you have broken up a very pleasant party; and we are equally indignant at your husband's pusillanimity in sub-

mitting to such treatment. It was nothing to you that he was enjoying himself; and he ought to have held you in better subjection than to have permitted your outrage. And so to punish you, as you threw the water out upon us, the place shall never be dry again,—not in the summer, for that would be no punishment, but in the damp, cold winter. And at the same time, the marks of our last dances shall always remain, to remind you and those who come after you of the cause."

Having said which he disappeared, like Aubrey's fairy, with a melodious twang, and was never seen again.

But the threat was carried out. Every winter when the mist drops from the skeleton trees and the gaunt pollards into the water, and the weirs are choked, and the towing-path covered, the floods roll over the Abbey Meads, and the boats go through the gateways, and the fish get into the fields, and Chertsey becomes almost an island. But in the summer the green rings come out amazingly fresh on Laleham Burway, however scorched up the surrounding pasturage may be. The fairies, however, have never appeared since. I cannot think what has become of them all. Perhaps a few got a little employment in rapping for the spirits, but a vast number, I believe, emigrated to the Continent, and nestled about Heidelberg, or led wandering lives with their cousins, the Djins and Peris of the East. And this may be why M. Grimm once heard a tale similar to the above, abroad; but, be sure, this is the original version, and the only true one.

LUCY'S BIRTHDAY.

BY W. M. THACKERAY.

SEVENTEEN rosebuds in a ring,
Thick with sister-flowers beset,
In a fragrant coronet,
Lucy's servants this day bring.
Be it the birthday wreath she wears;
Fresh and fair, and symbolling
The young number of her years,
The soft blushes of her Spring!

Types of Love, and Youth, and Hope,
Constant friends your mistress greet;
Be you ever pure and sweet,
Growing lovelier as you ope!
Cherished nursling, fenced about
By fond care, and tended so,
Scarce you 've heard of storms without,
Thorns that bite, or winds that blow;—

Kindly has your life begun,
And we pray that Heaven may send
To our flow'ret a bright sun,
A warm summer, a sweet end:
And, where'er her dwelling-place,
May she decorate her home;
Still expanding into bloom,
And developing in grace.

New York, April 15.

LE LAC DES FÉES.

PAR LE BARON DE MORTEMART.

En quittant Forbach, près de la Forêt-Noire, deux chemins se présentent au voyageur : l'un, celui à l'est, conduit au Mummelsée en traversant le Scharwzenbach (*Ruisseau noir*) ; l'autre, au nord, passe la Mourgue, entre dans la vallée de la Murg, Thall, et va à Langenbrand.

De noirs rochers, des ifs, des cyprès, des pins du nord, paraissent servir de ceinture et de barrière au *lac des Fées*. Il semble qu'il soit interdit aux hommes d'en approcher.

Les traditions et les naïves assertions des habitants des vallées de Laufen et de Kappel-Roder assurent que c'est à l'époque de la pleine lune que se tiennent les assemblées de ces fées. On les voyait autrefois danser en rond, se jouer sur le lac, et s'y plonger toujours au crépuscule du soir ; mais depuis les indiscrètes démarches d'un seigneur de Wurtemberg, elles ne communiquent plus avec les humains. Celles qui enfreignent ces lois, sont condamnées d'avance à vivre quelques instants de la vie des mortels, et à mourir bientôt après.

Cette partie de la Forêt-Noire est extrêmement âpre, et les froids y sont excessifs, comparativement aux environs. Le sommet des montagnes reste couvert de neige pendant la plus grande partie de l'année. La chaleur vivifiante du soleil y arrive très tardivement ; le cerisier y fleurit à peine lorsque tous ceux des basses vallées sont couverts de fruits.

Tout ce qui entoure le Mummelsée porte un aspect sauvage qui n'a pas le caractère général du pays. Les ifs, les mélèzes, les sapins courbent leurs branches sur un lichen blanchâtre et meurent avant le temps. Dans cette profonde solitude aucun bruit ne vient interrompre un silence solennel. . . . Les bords du lac et les environs offrent cependant encore quelques plantes pour l'herbier du botaniste, et sur ses eaux les belles corolles du nymphéa s'y ouvrent aux premiers rayons du jour, pour se refermer et rentrer sous l'onde aux premières heures du soir.

Les habitants de cette partie de la Forêt-Noire ont peuplé ce lac solitaire d'allégories et de fictions mélancoliques qui peignent les mœurs du pays. Dans les anciens jours, on crut remarquer quelques effets merveilleux sur ce lac; de là l'idée qu'il était habité par des fées, nymphes bienfaisantes qui encourageaient le travail et récompensaient la vertu. Dès que l'innocence et la pureté des mœurs s'altérèrent, les fées se montrèrent plus rarement, puis enfin cessèrent de paraître.

L'amour, histoire éternelle de la femme, agitait, dit-on, quelquefois l'ame immortelle de ces naïades. Un jour, une de ces nymphes, nommée Naïs, était occupée à tresser des couronnes de fleurs pour sa parure, lorsqu'elle entendit un son inconnu; c'était une harmonie différente de toutes celles qui avaient jusqu'alors frappé son oreille. Ce n'étaït point la brise qui se jouait dans les roseaux, ou la cascade qui faisait vibrer l'écho de ses notes argentines; c'était une méthode qui se modulait en sons divers, qui, tantôt grave, lui donnait une sorte d'effroi; tantôt douce et suave, retentissait au fond de son ame.

Elle écouta: le bruit cessa trop tôt, et avec lui une émotion neuve qui l'avait saisie, une sorte d'espérance inconnue qui l'avait charmée! Pauvre cœur de femme!

Distraite et pensive, elle s'éloigna insensiblement du lac, et, pendant qu'elle complétait ses couronnes, un seigneur à la cotte brillante d'or, égaré d'une chasse dont les cors éloignés avaient

frappé Naïs de leurs sons expirants, suivait attentif tous ses mouvements. Châtelain d'un bourg dont ces lieux sauvages étaient une dépendance, il chassait depuis le matin ; mais, oubliant sa fatigue et ses joies bruyantes, il ne vit plus de plaisirs que près de la séduisante jeune fille qu'il venait de surprendre. Ne sachant trop comment l'aborder, il lui vint à l'idée de grouper aussi les clochettes au corps d'albâtre, la belladona au cœur rosé, les aconits bleus, la valériane pourprée, et ces myosotis dont l'azur céleste provoque la pensée ! puis il surmonta le tout d'une de ces modestes roses des bois qui portent un innocent amour dans leur corolle virginale. Soit bonheur ou adresse, les fleurs du seigneur Conrad furent plus belles que celles de Naïs. Quand il eut terminé, il sonna doucement de son cor, et resta caché jusqu'à ce que la curiosité de Naïs l'eut découvert.

L'histoire peint en termes éloquents la joie et la surprise de la jeune fée ; nous pensons que celles du chasseur ne furent, ni moins grandes, ni moins douces. Enfin la voir, l'admirer, l'aimer, le lui dire, fut l'affaire d'un moment. Naïs n'était pas habituée aux déclarations. . . . Et, il faut le dire à la louange du passé, dans ces temps l'amour était chose importante, sérieuse et vraie ; on y mettait tout ce qu'on avait de pensée et de cœur. Aussi cet hommage tendre et naïf la trouva accessible ; et, comme les petits mots ambigus n'étaient pas connus à ces époques de candeur, comme elle n'était pas de ces femmes civilisées, qui calculent l'époque, le jour, le moment où elles diront j'aime, elle aima et le dit aussitôt.

Quant à Conrad, comme il pensait que remettre son bonheur dans l'avenir, c'était risquer tout pour un peut-être, il sut profiter du présent, et dès ce jour deux destinées furent fixées.

Conrad se disait dans l'ivresse de son bonheur : " Mon Dieu, voilà donc la femme que mon imagination rêvait, que mon cœur attendait, cette femme qu'on ignore, cette femme que

vous nous réservez dans votre bonté ineffable! Etre divin qu'on doit aimer à jamais! soit qu'elle ait pris naissance sous les palmiers de l'Orient, sous les myrtes d'Italie, ou sous les pins du Nord . . . Merci, mon Dieu!"

Il y avait bien un peu d'étrangeté dans tout ceci pour Naïs, mais elle aimait. Qu'a d'important alors la raison ou la folie de l'objet aimé? N'est-on pas soi-même dans un état fièvreux qui tient du délire? elle aimait donc, et tout ce que faisait ou disait Conrad était au mieux. Puis, il faut le dire encore, les fées étaient généralement indulgentes et bonnes; elles aimaient de bonne foi, sans calcul, et ne demandaient que l'amour qu'elles méritaient si bien.

Pour en revenir à nos deux amants, les instants qu'ils passaient ensemble étaient délicieusement employés; c'était bonheur que de les voir savourer, non cette poésie vague et incolore qui émane aujourd'hui du cerveau, mais celle plus vraie qui prend sa source au fond du cœur: douce harmonie, suave émanation des voluptés de l'ame!

Cependant la journée s'avançait. Ils avaient beaucoup parlé, ils s'étaient dit cent fois qu'ils s'aimaient, mais le principal avait été oublié . . . Quand et comment se reverraient-ils?

Le soleil allait disparaître, et la grande ombre de Fliegenloch et des sapins qui couronnaient sa tête, se prolongeait déjà sur le lac . . . Hélas! la crainte assiste à toutes les fêtes! Naïs frémit en pensant qu'il fallait prévenir Conrad qu'elle le quitterait chaque soir avant l'arrivée de la nuit. Elle le prévint donc en soupirant, puis elle ajouta:—

"Beau seigneur, vous ne me suivrez pas, vous me le promettez?

— Je le promets, dit Conrad.

— Et jamais votre vue ne s'enquerra des moyens que j'emploie pour disparaître de la terre?

— Jamais, répèta Conrad.

— Enfin vous ne m'appellerez pas près du lac; jamais mon nom ne retentira sur ses bords, lors même que je serais plusieurs jours sans me trouver au rendez-vous: vous le promettez, Conrad?

— Qu'il soit ainsi, puisque vous le voulez, ma Naïs, mon Ondine, ma fée bienfaisante; disposez de moi, souveraine de ma vie."

Et Naïs le quitta en emportant sur son cœur la moitié des fleurs que Conrad avait cueillies.

Les jours, les mois, les années se succédaient, et les deux amants étaient toujours plus tendres et plus aimants.—Conrad enseignait à Naïs cette mélodie des sons pour laquelle elle était passionnée; et, en échange, Naïs lui faisait connaître les choses mystérieuse du ciel, de la terre, et des eaux.

Puis Conrad lui disait: "Tu as mis dans moi une vie nouvelle, des sentiments meilleurs, plus nobles que ceux des autres hommes."

Et Naïs répondait: "Sans toi, tout est froid, tout est décoloré; sans ton amour, tout est mort autour de moi."

Hélas! la jouissance la plus pure, le bonheur le plus innocent, sont-ils éternels ici-bas! . . .

Conrad apprend un soir dans sa forteresse qu'un comte ou duc de Wurtemberg arme contre lui, et va surprendre son *burg*, afin de réunir à ses domaines le Mummelsée dont il entend raconter des choses merveilleuses. Conrad n'a qu'un moyen pour conjurer cet orage, c'est de le prévenir. Il rassemble cette même nuit ses vassaux et marche à l'ennemi . . . Mais, nous l'avons dit, le bonheur est de courte durée dans ce monde: il avait été trop doux, trop complet, pour que la fortune ne prît pas sa revanche. Blessé grièvement dans l'action, Conrad demeura prisonnier de son ennemi, qui s'empara de ses domaines et du merveilleux Mummelsée.

Dans son orgueil, le vainqueur osa, un jour que les eaux du

lac étaient calmes et transparentes, chercher la demeure des nymphes de ces eaux; il porta même le sacrilège jusqu'à jeter son nom, à l'aide d'un plomb suspendu, dans le palais même des fées, prétendant ainsi violer leur sanctuaire. . . . . Indignées d'autant d'audace, les naïades soulevèrent à l'instant les eaux, et renversèrent le radeau du seigneur de Wurtemberg, qu'on ramena à terre presque sans vie.

Depuis ce temps aucune sonde n'a pu atteindre le fond du lac; et aucune fée n'a pu communiquer avec un mortel; depuis ce temps aussi les affaires du seigneur de Wurtemberg allèrent de mal en pis.

Mais que devinrent les deux amants, au milieu d'évènements si désastreux? Cessèrent-ils de s'aimer?—Non. Les liens pour être durables ont besoin d'épreuves; plus ils sont tourmentés par les obstacles, ou inquiétés par les périls, mieux ils sont cimentés.

Naïs essaya d'abord d'oublier un attachement terrestre; on veut toujours guérir d'un amour tourmenté ou malheureux, sans penser qu'on regrettera bientôt ces chagrins de cœur, ces douleurs amères remplacées et oubliées par un seul moment des joies de l'ame!

C'est ce qui arriva aussi à Naïs; elle voulut vivre calme et indifférente; mais elle redemanda bientôt les misères, les inquiétudes de la vie humaine, pour en savourer encore les courtes délices.

Naïs alla donc au rendez-vous, elle y alla tous les jours; elle y alla pendant trois ans, cherchant, attendant Conrad. . . . Elle devint triste enfin et tourmentée comme l'attente quand on n'espère plus. Fatiguée, épuisée d'avoir attendu vainement pendant si long-temps, son dépérissement la retint au fond des eaux, sans qu'il lui fût possible d'en sortir. . . . Quant à Conrad, les souffrances, le malheur, rien aussi n'avait pu altérer sa constance. Enfermé dans une tour obscure, environné de

gardes, il gémit trois années dans les fers; mais l'amour et l'espérance l'avaient soutenu.

Cet amour avait nourri son cœur dans l'isolement et avait conservé toute sa suavité, comme ces roses enfermées dans l'herbier, qui conservent leurs parfums, quoique flétries.

Du fond de sa prison, sa pensée volait plus rapide que les vents vers le Mummelsée, et se glissait au milieu des jeunes fleurs de nénuphar, îles verdoyantes au milieu des eaux.—Que sont en effet les vents les plus rapides, qu'est-ce même le jet de la lumière, comparés au vol de la pensée !

D'une lucarne de la tour Conrad voyait un jeune pâtre, qui conduisait souvent son troupeau au pied de la prison, et bien des fois, depuis que la santé et la force lui étaient revenues, il mesurait la hauteur du donjon et cherchait les moyens de se mettre en rapport avec le seul être qui pût avoir pitié de son sort et lui prêter secours.

Un soir qu'il le voyait réunir son troupeau comme à l'ordinaire, pour gagner la cabane où il se retirait la nuit, il prit la grande détermination qu'il méditait depuis long-temps. Il retira de l'épaisseur d'un mur qu'il avait silencieusement creusé, la longue et forte tresse de paille qui lui avait coûté tant de soin. Il l'attacha à un des barreaux de la fenêtre, élargit l'ouverture qu'il s'était préparée, et se laissa glisser le long de la tour. . . . Lorsqu'il fut au bout de son fragile soutien, il s'aperçut que la corde était trop courte de quinze à vingt pieds; mais il se confia à Dieu, et sauta.

Le soleil commençait à dorer la cime des roseaux du lac des Fées; les fleurs des eaux ouvraient leur calice à sa lumière et à sa chaleur vivifiante, lorsqu'un pâtre errant et préoccupé s'approcha des bords du Mummelsée. A sa noble démarche, à la fierté de son regard, il était facile de reconnaître sous ce déguisement un chevalier de haute lignée. En effet c'était

Conrad, qui venait chercher à renouer sa vie à ce chaînon d'or qu'un mauvais jour avait brisé.

Conrad chercha et attendit jusqu'au coucher du soleil. Naïs ne vint pas.

Trois jours s'écoulèrent ainsi, et toujours vainement.

Conrad, expirant de fatigue et de besoin, parvint à se traîner sur un tertre qui domine le lac; là contemplant les petites vagues qui roulaient à ses pieds en répétant par mille facettes brillantes les rayons pourprés du soleil couchant, il fixa les eaux qui recélaient sa vie et son bonheur; et, dans la fièvre du malheur et de l'agonie, il s'écria:—Naïs, mourrai-je donc sans te voir?

Aussitôt une brise plaintive arriva à son oreille.—Conrad!—murmurait-elle; . . . et au même instant une colonne d'eau parut s'élever au-dessus du lac.

Conrad y jeta ses derniers regards avides, mais tout cessa bientôt. Une goutte de sang seulement vint à la surface, poussée par la vague; elle arriva près de Conrad, pour disparaître à ses pieds!

—A toi, mon ame! s'écria le chevalier, et il se précipita dans le Mummelsée. On chercha vainement depuis l'enveloppe mortelle de Conrad, on ne la retrouva point.

Hélas! lorsque de la fiction vous passez aux tristes vérités de la vie, vous trouvez la douleur dominant le monde. Et la devise du sire de Charny revenant à votre pensée, vous dites comme lui,—

Plus deuil que joie! . . .

Et si vous demandez force et courage contre les chagrins de ce monde, vous ne pouvez les trouver que dans l'amour et la religion.

THE FLOWER OF LIÈGE.

BY MRS. GRENVILLE MURRAY.

One evening, late in autumn, there stood before the curious Hôtel de Ville, at Liège, a man, apparently in a deep reverie, who might have seen some twenty-seven summers; but he looked older, for the trace of long and deep thought had already given many lines to the brow, and sharpened features which were originally, perhaps, too fine.

His countenance darkened as he pursued his meditations.

In truth, they were stirring times, and hopeful for men of energy and ambition. Europe was in a state of ferment from one end to the other; and now, if ever, seemed the time for the aspiring to rise.

But the stranger had thought too deeply to be a republican; nay, he would have dreaded to be even a reformer. He listened attentively to the fragments of conversation between the artisans as they passed him on their way home, weary from the day's toil, and soiled, blackened, with the smoke of the forge; and it was obvious their talk interested him painfully.

"The disunion of the people makes the force of kings," said a stalwart smith.

"And I say that kings are but charlatans, who live by our ignorance," added one of his companions. "I would have no kings, no princes, no ——"

"Why cannot we have a republic, then?" interrupted a

third. "Since we think thus, we have little reason to love our king, a stranger!"

"Ah! why, indeed?" returned the second speaker. "Then every man would have work, and bread. We should soon see if the rich ——"

The talkers passed on.

"And such," mused the stranger, "are the ideas of that many-headed thing we call the Public! Political freedom, indeed, the thirst of the wise, they understand not; they know not the meaning of Liberty in its true sense: to them it means the freedom to plunder those richer than themselves."

There was something about this person that bore the unmistakeable stamp of high birth; and a certain air of refinement which education, and the habit of associating with educated people, imparts. His dress, too, plain and simple, had that propriety about it which distinguishes the gentleman. And, in truth,—for we wish to borrow the interest of our little tale from no vulgar source,—he was the confidential secretary and near relation of the Count ——, then holding a high place in the ministry, and had been sent down to inquire into the causes of some recent disturbances, in which the people of Liège, as turbulent as their forefathers, had been concerned. Immediately on his arrival there had waited upon him the Sieurs Thiriast, Roland, Soiens, Godefroid, L'Hoest, Guldre, Wonfers Haas, and Shuilliers, all among the most chief and notable dignities of the town, who hastened to assure the envoy of Government of their unalterable loyalty; and, in truth, in such times there was sore need of it.

The Sieur Thiriast, who, from a similarity of names, claimed some relationship with the Secretary, determined to give a great banquet in honour of his kinsman and namesake's arrival; and proud of the opportunity of showing off so important a connexion, great were the preparations made by the wealthy

gunsmith: for such was the craft he exercised, and for which the ancient city of Liége is most famous.

Little knew the worthy citizen of court fortunes, or, perhaps, he might have looked on his namesake with a far different feeling to that which prompted the awe-stricken respect which he now manifested for him. For the poor Secretary was placed in that most unenviable of positions, having a high rank and historical name, with nothing to support either. He had run through a fortune, anything but large, which he had inherited, and had long been in the hands of the Jews, from whom he borrowed money as they lend it. Luckless Secretary!

However, "there are no privations to one who lives in the future," and such was the existence of the Secretary. Ambition was the goal to which all his efforts were directed, the one great prize which he had resolved to win, or failing, to die in the race; and the hope of success, and of being one day great, made present ills vanish, and inspired him with force and courage to overcome all his difficulties, even the threats of his angry creditors, which followed him everywhere. Sometimes, it is true, a passing cloud darkened his manly brow when he thought on the disgrace with which they seemed determined to overwhelm him, and dreaded lest it should reflect on the Government, which, Heaven knows! had sins enough of its own to answer for; but now, forgetting his own annoyances, as we all can when we have anything else to attend to—and, therefore, it may be argued that nothing is so fatal to man as the want of something to do,—forgetting, I say, his own annoyances, he put on his most conciliating smile, and went with an open brow, but with an observant eye and penetrating mind, to the gathering of the burghers of Liège.

There was many a name amongst that mustering of wealthy citizens which gave light to the page of history, and was fa-

miliar to scholars of all nations, and on strange shoulders has the mantle of the crusader and of the man of letters often fallen.

One short, plethoric, little man, who carried on the trade and calling of a hosier, bore the proud name of the Christian King of Jerusalem; while one De Groot—a coal-merchant and mine-holder—looked as if his researches in literature had gone little farther than the ledger.

But the young Secretary was too good a politician, and had too much of that habitual courtesy of courts, to treat any of these dull, worthy burghers, with contempt or indifference; on the contrary, he listened attentively to all their grievances, communicated readily his own ideas on the manner of rectifying them, and promised, with an encouraging smile, to bring their wishes before the Prince, who, he said, loved the good burghers of Liège so well. And thus, although the Secretary was pledged to nothing, yet won he golden opinions from all, and every one was contented; and this, we take it, is the art and mystery of diplomacy.

Leaving, for a while, the rougher portion of the guests, the Secretary now went to pay his court to the fairer sex; many a heart beat more quickly as his tall and graceful form approached. And it was easy to see that the impression made upon the female part of the gathering was not less favourable than that produced upon the male portion of the visitors.

The banquet was followed by a ball—*a bal costumé!* Such a startling event had rarely before occurred at Liège, and the announcement of it did not fail to call down upon the Sieur Thiriast the animadversions of his neighbours. Some of the sober-minded citizens regarded it as a "French impropriety" of the most glaring description; others were shocked at such a deviation from the strict habits of decorum for which the

Liègeois were held remarkable, and felt half-inclined to oppose such an innovation. All, however, agreed that, although improper, it would doubtless be very pleasant, and must therefore be tolerated; an easy kind of philosophy, practised perhaps by others as well as by the Liègeois. And so, having made a sort of compromise with their conscience, and setting aside all prejudices, the bold burghers, with their wives and daughters, mustered in great force, and entered warmly into the festivities of the evening.

Costly and various were the costumes exhibited by the wealthy burghers; and if, as some assert, a man's character may be read in the choice of his habiliments, the motley group here assembled afforded a curious study.

Guy de Thiriast, the young Secretary, profited by the occasion to exchange his simple suit of black for one of crimson and purple velvet, better calculated to display his tall and handsome person; and never, perhaps, had the gold-embroidered tunic, slashed hose, mantle, and plumed cap, been seen to greater advantage, nor the gold spurs worn by a worthier knight. He appeared to take great interest in the entertainment provided for him, and scanned with a curious eye the different groups of fair Liègeoises in their many-coloured costumes. And one figure was there amongst that busy throng which well might rivet his eye, fastidious as it was in female beauty: a figure more perfect never delighted either painter or sculptor, a tall, fair, delicate-looking girl, with that sweet, pensive cast of countenance, so interesting, so graceful, impressive to all, yet especially apt to fascinate a man whose taste is somewhat *blasé*. Her double-skirted dress, as becoming in its simplicity as admirable for its good taste, was caught up on the right side by a scarf or broad ribbon, which was tied loosely round her beautiful form; and the low, square bodice, laced up in front, showed beneath it one of those modest little chemisettes, which

partly concealed the rounded beauty of a bust which would have charmed equally the poet or the sensualist; whilst the arms, as faultless in shape as dazzling in whiteness, were seen from the elbow, through ruffles of old Mechlin lace, which fell beneath the loose sleeves of the dress. She had that bright, sunny, auburn hair, which seems to have expression in every wave of it, and which is so in harmony with a fair, delicately-tinted complexion such as hers: it was drawn from the face to the back of the head, and fell in lightly-plaited tresses. This style of coiffure added to the graceful shape of the head as well as to the beauty of the profile, which, however, was in itself perfect. A finely-chiselled, straight nose, and well-opened dark-blue eyes, completed the beauty of a face which had won for Hulda Thiriast, the gun-smith's daughter, the appellation of "the Flower of Liège."

A thrill, such as he had never before felt, passed through the frame of the young statesman, as thus the living type of the loveliness of which he had dreamed seemed to stand before him. Such a noble, classic beauty, had the girl—so pure, so calm, so untouched did she appear by human passion—that he paused as one under some strange influence before he could find words to address her, in one of those *banal* compliments which he would have found so readily for any one else.

With graceful and unaffected courtesy replied the maiden to his gallantry; and as a bright smile parted her coral lips, they revealed teeth of such transparent and pearly whiteness that they might have belonged to an angel!

The charm was now complete. Guy de Thiriast was in complete thraldom to her transcendent loveliness, and a jealous pang shot like an arrow through his heart as a rich young Baron of the neighbourhood claimed her hand for the dance. The dance terminates—the quick glance of Guy de Thiriast follows her from place to place, and now it rests admiringly upon her in the garden.

L. H. Sherwood

Frederick A. Heath

Hulda appeared to feel the ardour of her young kinsman's gaze, for although she raised not her eyes at his approach, a trembling of the lids might be seen, and she seemed to be more earnestly engaged in plucking the leaves from a flower which she held in her hand, and which, in her embarrassment, she had nearly destroyed.

"Methought, gentle cousin," said he, "that you were studying the language of flowers; and I would fain inquire which of your slaves hath made that simple blossom the bearer of his homage?"

"The one, certainly, most unlearned in the elegant language which poets have given to flowers," replied she, *naïvely*; "otherwise he would not have chosen such a missive."

"See you not that it is the narcissus?"

"He ought rather to have offered this chaste emblem of friendship," said he, passing his arm behind the fair girl and gathering a sprig of ivy.

"You understand, then, their significations?" inquired she, still regarding her flower.

"Some of them. But tell me," continued he, "were I to place at your feet the myrtle and the forget-me-not, what would you deign to give me in return?"

"I scarcely know; time would be necessary to study their significations," replied she, as the colour on her cheek heightened.

"Oh, fair dissembler! you know them quite well." And lowering his voice he added, "I would ask a sprig of hawthorn, the sweet emblem of hope: should I plead in vain?"

Midnight now sounded from the old clock of St. Jacques, and the guests began to disperse; but Guy de Thiriast still lingered, apparently unable to tear himself away from so much happiness; and unable longer to utter any of those *lieux-communs* which make the current coin of society, he became more

interesting for that reason. He spoke of poetry and song, of history, and great deeds of old; a theme, by the bye, in which he rarely indulged, from the fear, which all men have, of being misunderstood, although he was a scholar and a poet.

Spell-bound, the fair girl listened, and hung upon words which well might charm a young fresh heart away; and the more dangerous to her in their fascination, if danger there be in love and happiness, for that among the habitants of Liège none had she ever met who could bear a comparison with him who now addressed her.

And the banquet and the ball at length were over. Such things as these pass away, though not so soon the memories which they often leave behind them. And other days and other things, as important for those with whom our story is chiefly connected, passed also; and the young statesman, perhaps to sift to the very bottom the affairs of the riots, remained many days at Liège; and taking advantage of the connexion which the vain-glorious gunsmith had been so anxious to claim with him, he came so often to his house that even the Sieur Thiriast himself wondered at the length and frequency of his visits; and more wondered his virtuous wife, the true and faithful companion of thirty years,—for such, O Cynic, there are, even among the rough commons of Liège.

And then, when post after post brought letters to the Secretary, and coursers spurred hot and hastily in quick succession to press his return,—when excuse was vain, and that return could no longer be delayed, above, on the heights of Liège, and looking down upon its many forges and furnaces, there stood, one starry evening, a girl of passing loveliness, with a tall and gallant form beside her; and they were the lovers of our tale.

"And tell me, Hulda," said the wooer, "thinkest thou that in thy gentle woman's heart there dwells a constancy that can

resist the storms and trials of years, and through good and evil report cling fondly, faithfully as now, to him who would lay down his life to spare thee but the pang of a moment?"

"It is I, rather, who should question," was the reply. "The feeling which here you may have cherished, of a growth so sudden, may die as soon; and now returning, as you will, among the highborn, the proud, the fair, will you always bear about with you the memory of the gunsmith's daughter? and will her love shield you from all other passions?"

"Can you doubt that it will, sweet child?—

'It were unworthy thy love,
It were a wrong to mine,
To think that aught could change it
In life, or death, or time.'

Of my faith rest assured, dear love," replied he, with a melancholy smile; "for my heart has been tried in many storms, and dear to it is the haven of your love: besides, occupied in the toils of ambition—ambition to become worthy of thee—I shall have no time to be faithless."

"Ambition is the rival I most fear, dear Guy. Lured on by its charms, you will become more and more enslaved; until at length all—all will be sacrificed to its overwhelming influence. And now forgive me," said Hulda, joining her hands round his strong arm, and looking tenderly up in his face, "if I add, that there is something in this secrecy which pains and wounds me. Nay, look not sad; I will ask nothing that you desire too —— But my father is rich, and proud would he be to know you wooed his daughter."

"My wish, my pride, Hulda, is to obey you. This night, then, I will see your sire, and make known to him my suit and our love. But he must also know that Guy, the last of the knightly line of De Thiriast, came not to his house, a penniless adventurer—for such I am—to steal away his daughter; and that

if he would consent to give her rich charms to a beggar there is that within me, courtier as I am, that would make me refuse even a prize so coveted."

"'T is ever thus," returned Hulda, sadly, but with the pride that a woman feels at being loved worthily,—"it is ever thus with the nobler and better among men. Ye are too proud to owe anything to Love, whilst we women are happy to owe to it all. Go, then, life of my life, lord of my heart! go, since it must be; go upon your bright career. But, oh, remember!" she continued, rising into a noble eloquence, while her soft eye flashed and her pale cheek grew crimson, "if years glide on, and fruitless be your labour; if energy, talent of such rare order; if faith, and hope, and truth be exerted in vain, your ambition frustrated and your spirit sinking, oh, think that there is here one heart beating for your return, that will know no joy, no peace, till then; and that if you had been crowned with the most brilliant success, could not love you better than she would in the darkest hour of defeat."

"*Speak* not, even to the winds, omens so mournful," returned her lover. "To will strongly in this world is to succeed, for all things human yield to untiring perseverance; and say," he added, passionately, looking into the beaming eyes of Hulda, "say, what can daunt or turn me back with the prize I have before me? Yes, great and honoured, with a high place among men, will I return to you, that you may be the honoured among women. And then wilt thou not listen, and reward me with a bright sunny smile, as of old, when I relate,—

'How oft thy gentle memory
A talisman hath proved
To shield me from all evil,
Because by thee beloved?'

I were, indeed, base and unworthy, could I ask you to share the lot I now only could offer,—debt, difficulty, a thousand mean

and paltry pains, yet destroyers of love, would haunt us; till faded each early dream, blighted the sweet romance that should hallow all passion, we should weep the bitter tears of regret. Success, Hulda, believe me, will be mine, were it only for thy dear sake. Well is the man loved who knows how to sacrifice himself."

And Hulda replied fondly, though with a strange and musing voice, for Thought was busy in her brain:—

"Yes, succeed you will—it is graven on your brow; for success is ever the meed of the wise and good. But will you return? shall we meet again? I know not why, but a strange, a dim foreboding, seizes me, and whispers, No! Guy, dear Guy! think yet again,—can you not remain, and, giving up the false dreams of ambition, live only for love—and me!"

"Too fondly my heart responds to your soft and gentle pleading, beloved Hulda, and, syren-like, lures me to stay; but honour, duty, every manly, better feeling, calls loudly to me to hearken not to the voice of the charmer."

While this conversation was going on, they had gradually passed the ramparts and fortified gates of the city, and were now within its busy streets.

There is something even in the very air of cities, which, though favourable to passion, silences the soft communings of love: and noiselessly, therefore, they paced the thronged squares and quays of the great commercial town, till they arrived before the gate of the house where dwelt the great armourer, Roland Thiriast; and with a mute pressure of the hand, which said more than could words, both entered. *Their* parting was over. Before, however, the Secretary left the house of his host, he would have spoken of the love he bore the gentle Hulda; but we command not opportunity. Many friends and acquaintance of the opulent citizen came in to take their leave of him; and among the rest a certain Baron de Maion, who was the last

person in the world he wished to see; and thus, with some of those things which always follow in the train of our mischance, his object was frustrated. Time pressed, his adieux were quickly made, and flattered much was the gunsmith at the warmth with which the courtier bade him good-bye. A few minutes, and he was gone; and sadly smote upon the listening ears of Hulda the trampling of his horse's hoofs as they splashed through the eternal rain of the Low Countries.

On flies the triumphal car of Time, laden with the spoils of all mortal things for trophies, and careless of what he breaks upon his wheel. Human happiness, the peace of hearths, the hope of nations, the success of empires,—these his flying coursers trample beneath their feet; and on speeds the chariot of old Time: mortal, yet deaf to mortal joy, to mortal woe and fate, is the ruthless charioteer.

Three years had elapsed since the courtier had sought the merchant-town of Liège and parted with its citizens, and during this time an irregular correspondence had been kept up between the beautiful Hulda and Guy de Thiriast. It was full of difficulty; for how is a maiden, and a Flemish maiden, to receive the missive of her lover unknown to her guardians?

The old story, her waiting-maid, the only one, was in the interest of the handsome and generous chevalier; but why, asks the reader, was not their love confessed?

Why, in the character of Guy de Thiriast there was a certain wayward romance, which had survived even the blasting influence of courts, so apt to strip the poetry from all things, and to invest them with the sober drab of plain matter-of-fact; and the charm of his love was heightened by the mystery which hung over it, and by the thousand little difficulties which the secret entailed.

His fortunes, too, since the time at which we first introduced him to the kind reader, had rapidly improved. His patron and

relation, the minister, falling into a long and dangerous illness, the weight of public affairs almost wholly fell upon him, with their attendant wealth and honours; and he hoped the time not far distant when, high in place and with a fortune assured, he might openly claim his bride, his bright, his beautiful Hulda, the Flower of Liège.

And at this time was there another dangerous crisis in public affairs, which shook the kingdom to its very centre; and day and night toiled the young minister of a new throne,—a throne not yet cemented through length of time by the people's affection.

And it was now that the Baron de Maion, the son of a plebeian, from his great wealth ennobled, was seen often at the house of the great gunsmith, the father of Hulda. Ere long he had spoken in moving tropes of his love for her. Small difficulty was there, I ween, to make the armourer listen to his suit, for his wealth was the proverb of Liège. "As rich as Raoul de Maion!" they said. And so the old gunsmith, who, like most men who have amassed great wealth in trade, had elevated gold into a god and fell down and worshipped it, told his daughter, with but short preamble, that a great honour awaited her, and that within a month she would be the wedded wife of the wealthy Lord of Maion, and lady of lands and houses, jewels, and unnumbered servants.

But she, clinging round her father's neck, now told him that it could not be, and confessed her long-cherished secret love for Guy de Thiriast, the namesake of whom he was so proud.

In her sire's mind, however, nothing could weigh for one moment against the heavy coffers of the plebeian noble. He would listen, he said, to no idle talk, no woman's phantasy. The Baron de Maion wished her for a wife, and his wife should she be.

With some rare exceptions, the old have little sympathy with the young; and even her mother, a worthy woman in her way,—yes, even her mother advised her to hearken to her father's counsel, and commented on the happiness she would enjoy, when, the envy of the whole city, she should be elevated to the style and title of the Baroness de Maion!

And so the guests were summoned, and the contract was signed. The bridegroom received the congratulations of his friends, and blithe was the old burgher,—profuse his hospitality. But the maiden's heart was full to breaking! The dim foreboding which had come over her, in the last interview which she had with her lover, now recurred to her, and she wept bitter tears at the recollection of it. Three days ago had she sent to her lover relating her terrible situation, yet no answer came; and on the morrow was she to be wed. Little dreamed she that her messenger for once had proved false, and that which would have summoned her lover to her fleet as the wind, great and glorious as he was, had never reached him.

Shift we the scene.

At a table, covered with papers of deep and various import, and many as yet unopened, sits a man still in the bloom of life, but with a wrinkled brow, reading some official documents: and as he read, from time to time he made notes on various other documents before him,—all arranged and docketted with the scrupulous care of a man who knows that the value of order is not confined to the counting-house, but is the soul of all affairs.

In and out as he reads glide the stealthy steps of clerks and high officials, as they bring in fresh papers for the minister's signature, or remove others ready laid for them.

Triumph sits on the broad calm brow of the statesman: he has toiled, but not in vain; he has reached the goal, won the prize, for he is great and famous: thus far his prediction is verified. But, alas! they have cost him dearly; and though

he is just now anxious and care-worn, it is evident that his anxiety, on whatever subject it may be, is rather for others than for himself.

And now there enters a tall and commanding figure, of that right royal mien so seldom now the gift of royalty, but when on a monarch's brow its seal the signet of majesty is, well may it be valued; and a monarch of nature's stamp and warrantry was the stately figure that now, in acknowledging the greeting of the minister — respectful yet affectionate, for the state's urgency had drawn close the links between the master and the servant — laid his hand kindly on his shoulder and spoke to him as to a younger brother.

Deep care and harassing anxiety had worn their iron marks into that kingly face; for he too, reader, had toiled and schemed his life away in vain, as most of us do, but with a nobler object than that permitted to others,—a people's welfare! And now that people sought to drive him from the throne with execration; to wrench the sceptre from a hand that had wielded it so worthily. Behold the reward of many days passed in labour, of many nights in thought, for the good of men! Oh, were there not another reward—that which lies in a sound, approving conscience, 't would sicken Virtue of herself and make us Timons.

And the council of the monarch and the minister was long and earnest, and many things were discussed,— some settled, some deferred, some abandoned; and lastly, having wisely thought for others, the statesman pleaded for himself, and a brief absence was granted him to bring home his bride.

It was at the close of evening in the autumn of —— that a traveller, mounted on a superb steed, left the rich lands of Louvaine behind him, and, descending the steep heights, at last came to where the forges and many lights of Liège are just visible; and as dear to him was the smoke and the clanging

noise of the forges as Paradise opening on the pardoned Peri.

But first, with a lover's pardonable vanity, he alighted at the old hostel which stands in the "Grande Place," and desiring his attendant to follow him, proceeded to remove the stains of travel, and to deck his person in becoming guise; and then he asked his host for news of Roland Thiriast.

"Blithe enough is the gunsmith and his household," returned mine host; "for but three days since his fair daughter wed with Raoul, baron of Maion: and a worthy gentleman he is!"

The stranger, who was not one of those whose hearts break with an explosion, returned no answer, but taking horse, within an hour rode away from Liège. To him fell darkness over all created things, and never mentioned he again the name of Hulda.

Ambition was his bride for ever!

It was many years after that the Baron of Maion took his lovely wife to court; and there it was amid revelry, and lights, and music, that Hulda saw the love of her youth. He was a pale man, with a face lined and wrinkled, a cold eye, and bloodless lip; yet when he saw her, that statesman, old before his time and to the world so passionless, trembled as doth a maiden of sixteen; and the king, who with a kind eye saw him whom he loved so moved, took him aside and said:—

"My Thiriast, I know that between thee and yon fair, fair woman, is there that which pains thee—the keen memory of wrong or disappointment. Alas! I too have known what these are. Pass we from the room."

And leaning on the arm of Guy de Thiriast, mid bowing courtiers, walked the king; and the minister became the envy of them all: yet the next day he left the capital, nor returned he till the fair love of his youth had departed.

And his tenderness, his passionate regret, his devotion, his

faith and truth, were never known to the object of them, and he received no reward.

But high over time and circumstances, over success and power, reigned the tyrant Love, ruler of him yet! For never had he forgotten his boyhood's dream, his manhood's hope and pride, and now his age's sorrow,

"The Flower of Liège."

SONNET.

BY CALDER CAMPBELL.

Why should we pine and perish, sickness-struck,
Ere half our daily tasks are done, and rest
Is purchased for the future? Why invest
Our heart-gold in a venture that can brook
No harsh defeat? Why live, and love, and look
For love and life again, yet find mistrust
And falsehood, and the grave in human dust,
Where we had searched for peace?—This wind, which shook
Fruits from yon boughs unripen'd, doth not fly
More fleetly than our hopes,—which like those fruits
Fall blighted!— One great sorrow lurks in Truth,
Which God alone can pluck up by the roots!—
And thus Experience answers with a sigh
The eager whys and wherefores of our youth!

IRONIE.

PAR MADAME EMILE DE GIRARDIN.

D'UN bonheur profané vous rappelez l'ivresse,
Vous vous faites un droit de nos beaux jours perdus,
Coupable, vous m'offrez vos remords de tendresse . . .
Il est trop tard, je n'y crois plus.

Vous rattachez la fleur sur sa tige brisée,
Et vous lui demandez de vivre encore un jour . . .
Mais la mourante fleur ne sent plus la rosée,
Mais mon cœur ne sent plus l'amour.

Non non . . . de votre joug je sais qu'on se délivre,
Je sais qu'on peut user un désespoir jaloux,
Le prestige est détruit . . . je sais qu'on peut survivre
Aux tourmens qui viennent de vous.

Ces tourmens ! vous avez refusé de les plaindre,
Dédaignant un amour dont vous étiez trop sûr . . .
Mon Dieu, qu'il a fallu de larmes pour l'eteindre
Cet amour si noble et si pur !

Je trouvais tant de joie à me faire humble et douce,
A cacher ma raison sous un rire trompeur,
A voiler sur mon front cet orgeuil qui repousse
Ce rayonnement qui fait peur ! . . .

Je devenais enfant . . . je renonçais sans peine
Aux succès dont l'éclat aurait pu vous choquer,
Et tout bas je disais : Qu'il est doux d'être Reine,
D'être Reine, pour abdiquer !

Mais l'amour ne veut pas du pouvoir qu'on lui donne ;
Un sacrifice offert ne saurait le toucher ;
Moi . . . pour plaire, j'avais déposé ma couronne . . .
Folle ! . . on voulait me l'arracher !

En amour si l'on n'est bourreau l'on est victime ;
On se déconsidère à force de grandeur,
C'est un jeu dangereux qu'un dévoûment sublime,
La confiance éteint l'ardeur.

O misère ! ô dégoût ! ainsi celui qu'on aime
Est l'ennemi constant qui doit vous désarmer,
Votre crime à ses yeux est dans votre amour même,
Il vous méprise de l'aimer !

Défiez vous de lui, voilez vous de mystère ;
Cachez lui prudemment le secret de vos jours,
S'il sait que vous n'aimez que lui seul sur la terre,
Il rêvera d'autres amours.

Qu'il n'apprenne jamais jusqu'où va sa puissance !
Des maux qu'il peut causer n'allez pas l'avertir ;
S'il croit que vous devez mourir de son absence,
Il s'occupera de partir.

Oui, pour être adorée il faut être sans ame,
La ruse et la froideur, voilà les seuls appas,
Un noble amour rend laide . . . et la plus belle femme
Est la femme qui n'aime pas !

Aimez moi donc, enfin ; puisque mon cœur rebelle,
Ecoute sans pitié vos regrets superflus,
Regardez maintenant, regardez, je suis belle,
Aimez moi donc, je n'aime plus.

Paris, 1840.

KAISER RUDOLPH'S RIDE TO THE GRAVE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF KERNER.

BY ETA.

At his tow'r of Gersnersheim one day,
In spirit strong, in body weak,
At chess would Kaiser Rudolph play,
Oblivion of his pains to seek.

He paused:—"Thou Leech of learned fame,
Tell—fearless tell to me—
When shall this weak decaying frame
Th' imprisoned soul set free?"

Thus urged, the man of science said,—
"Sire, it might be—to-night!"
"Thanks for that news!"—he raised his head
And smiled with calm delight.

"To Spire! to Spire!* where sleeps my sire,"
He cried as the game was done;
"Grant, Austrian heroes, my desire,—
"There—there—receive your son!

* The Cathedral of Spire was formerly the burial-place of the German emperors.

"Let the bugle sound, and the steed be found
That so oft to battle bore me!
Follow!" he cried—with a warrior's pride—
"Once more I go before ye!"

And forth the stately steed was brought,—
"Not now for war but lasting peace;
"Thy service, faithful friend, is sought,—
"Then—let that service cease!"

And now the monarch mounts his steed,
By his weeping train escorted;
On either hand by a knightly band
And a priestly arm supported.

The old ancestral lindens bowed,
As slowly moved their lord along;
From all their branches, deep and loud,
The birds poured forth a funeral song.

And thronging thousands round him swarm,
Soon as the mournful news was heard;
They saw their hero's dying form,
And their inmost souls were stirred.

But of heaven he spoke—no more of earth—
And he smiled, that Monarch grey,
Blithely as if he but went forth
For a pleasure-ride in May!

From the lofty dome of Spire, to greet him,
Now the solemn bell tolled out;
Burgher, knight, and maiden, meet him,
Mingling tears with loyal shout.

In the high, imperial hall,
On a throne of gold he 's seated;
And he prays!—he prays for all—
By all his dying prayer repeated.

"Give me now my Saviour's blood!"
Thus he spake with pallid lips:
And he tastes the sacred food,
And the sacred wine he sips.

Then the hall appeared to him
Swimming in supernal light;
And his eyes, no longer dim,
Shone with youthful radiance bright.

"Twelve!" the deep-toned clock is telling,
Midnight torches blaze around;
Solemn music there is swelling,
He hath pass'd from sight and sound!

Bells! ye need not tell the story
Through the Rhine-land stricken-hearted;
All who loved and shared his glory
Feel their hero has departed!

To the Minster stream the people—
See the dark procession roll;
Lay him 'neath its lofty steeple—
Heaven's high dome receive his soul!

ON THE

PORTRAIT OF MISS DE HORSEY.

BY HENRY F. CHORLEY.

Gentle Lady! with that painted book
  Fluttering open in your lily hand,
Turning from its pages with a look
  That can mirth or sadness understand;
Do you number Woman's myriad wiles,
  Or the bold expectancies of Man,
How to make them suppliants for your smiles,
  (Victims ever since the world began),
  Gathering meditation from your fan?

There hath Coypel daintily expressed
  Hercules at Queen Omphale's knee,
Showing how a club, if well caressed,
  To a harmless distaff changed may be?—
There hath Boucher touched the dainty troops
  Who still people blissful Arcadies;
Round-eyed *Delias* mincing o'er their hoops,
  Satin *Strephons* under willow-trees,
Spangled Cupids dancing in a grove,
  Where court ladies sacrifice to Pan,
And the patched and powdered Queen of Love,
  Travels æther in a pearl sedan;
While your very heart within you droops,
  Thinking how Earth's glories are but prose,
  Cheapside revels, as compared with those
Breathed by charming Genius on your fan?

There doth Poesy with bays and lute,
  Floating on a cloud of Sèvres blue,
Point to trim Parnassus under-foot,
  With the peakèd toe of high-heeled shoe?
Listen, Lady! what the syren sings
  To the fair one that instruction seeks,—
"Angels wear false feathers in their wings,
  Every rose has rouge upon its cheeks;
Did you dream the cowslip real gold?
  Try it, fond enthusiast, in the fire!—
There 's in every robe an awkward fold,
  One false note in every seraph's lyre,
Truth is spotted, and Belief a jest;
  Sip of pleasant pastime while you can,
Age will come too soon your joy to waste,—
  Lure the men, and laugh behind your fan!"—

"'T is a glad and pretty world, in truth,
  Where cotillons last the live-long day;
And the eye of each enamoured youth
  Looks a thousand things he dare not say;
And each drooping *Dulcibel* is rich
  In the arts that heroes bold deceive;
And 't is daily duty to bewitch
  Damons who in silly songs believe;
And the warmest heart is wooed and won
  By rare bribes from India or Japan;
And since all are false, are none undone,"—
  Saith the Sybil singing on your fan.

"How could Lady Clara break her heart?
  Should a popinjay's desertion kill?

Why did slander Guy from Marion part ?
  Grace, his first-beloved, was falser still.
When Sir Eglamour brought home his bride,
  Was it fair his heart with rage should beat
Though he found her ebon tresses dyed ?—
  They had drawn him captive to her feet.
Faith is but a dream—Belief a jest—
  Woman is a doll, an ape is Man.
Dance, and sing, and scheme like all the rest,"—
  Saith the Muse enthroned upon your fan.

Thus a worldling, tripping wearily
  On the path that down Life's mountain leans,
With experience old and worn, *perdie*,
  Babbled of the morals writ on screens ;
When the flowers that faded things rebuke,
  And the summer breezes, singing on
To the echoes of the distant brook,
  Gathered round the lady fair and lone,
Murmuring,—" Hence with all thy quips and wiles !
  Leave her to the incense that we breathe;
Leave her to the heavens, whose changing smiles
  Soothe and gladden the sad world beneath !
Take thy lore to whom it doth beseem,
  Worldly maiden greet with worldly tongue ;
But for her, be Music still a dream,
And the odour of the roses stream
  Round the unconscious beauty of the young !—
Not till Time hath chilled her joyous heart,
  Till her eyes grow dim, her forehead wan,
Till her early blush and tear depart,
  Bid her learn to mock, and doubt, and plan,
  From the pictures painted on her fan."

THE MARRIED MAN.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Mrs. Clifton was a pleasing, intelligent, agreeable young widow; she was generally cited by her friends as an example of an exceedingly happy person; she had fine health, a fine temper, excellent talents, and an easy income. She had certainly endured the trial of losing a good husband after a very short union, but she had married him from motives of esteem, rather than from those of affection; and although she mourned for him sincerely, seven years of widowhood had effectually dried up her tears.

At the time when I introduce Laura Clifton to the notice of my readers she was about nine-and-twenty years of age, and lived in a pretty house in a pleasant part of London, enjoying a desirable and select society of friends. Laura had few family connexions, and her late husband had still fewer; consequently, she principally consulted her own taste in the guests whom she invited to her house, and the clever, the refined, and the accomplished, abounded therein. Even in that select circle, however, Laura had her favourites, and she was now anticipating with much pleasure a visit from Katherine Alford, who had been her chosen friend from youth. Katherine was unmarried; she had been affianced for some years, and her lover, who was the Fellow of a College, was anxiously awaiting the living which should enable him to offer a home to her.

"You are looking very grave, Katherine, this morning," said Laura Clifton; and indeed Katherine's countenance scarcely seemed in keeping with the flowers, birds, musical instruments, and gaily-bound books, which ornamented Laura's pretty drawing-room.

"What will you say, Laura," asked Katherine, "if I tell you that you have a share in causing the gravity of which you complain?"

"I can only say," replied Mrs. Clifton, "that I enjoy all the consolations of a clear conscience in regard to having done aught to rob your eyes of one ray, or your cheek of one dimple; therefore have the kindness to enumerate all the counts of your indictment."

"Promise me that you will not be offended with what I am going to say."

"Certainly not. I conclude you are going to offer me advice, which, as the conundrum says, 'everybody needs, everybody asks for, everybody gives, and nobody takes.' I am at a loss, however, to guess what you can have to advise me about. I keep within my income, care nothing about scenes of gaiety, and never flirt."

"I know you never flirt; if you did, I should not tremble for you as I do now: were you merely indulging in a brief passage of lively coquetry, I should scarcely think it worth while to interfere to check an evil which your own excellent sense would so soon enable you to correct: but when the heart makes a blameable election, it is the duty of a friend at all events to state her faithful opinion on the subject."

"My dear Katherine, you absolutely mystify me by your strange language. What do you mean about hearts and blameable elections? So far from being in any danger of that kind, my favourite cavalier at present happens to be a married man."

"And that is precisely the point which causes my uneasiness;

I hear from all quarters that you are continually seen in company with Sir Henry Glyndon."

"That is true, I admit; but do not suppose that we meet in gay and fashionable assemblies. Sir Henry is, like myself, musical and literary, and we attend exquisite concerts, clever lectures, and charming little conversaziones together; and where is the harm of doing so?"

"I consider that there is more danger in the places you describe than there would be in the brilliant ball-room or crowded card-party. Sir Henry has certainly a congenial mind with your own, and you are both likely to become more sensible of this congeniality when employed in pursuits equally interesting to each of you."

"And why, dear Katherine, must I be deprived of the pleasure of associating with a kindred spirit?"

"Because the possessor of it is one who is divided from you by all laws, human and divine; because Sir Henry Glyndon has vowed love and constancy to another."

But, Katherine, Lady Glyndon is an invalid, dull, peevish, and unintellectual—she is unable to enter into society: would it be reasonable to expect that Sir Henry should abjure all society for her sake?"

"No, it would not be reasonable; and I should consider Lady Glyndon very selfish if she were to exact such a sacrifice from him: but there is a wide difference between abjuring all society, and devoting himself with objectionable peculiarity to the society of one, excelling in all those charming and winning qualities in which you justly say that poor Lady Glyndon is deficient."

"Well, as you seem so sensible of Lady Glyndon's deficiencies, you must surely pity Sir Henry for being united to such a woman."

"Not in the least; she was the voluntary choice of Sir

Henry, and although she could never have been intelligent, she possessed, I am told, a pleasing person and a good temper, before ill-health impaired the one and soured the other. Sir Henry should remember that she was the wife of his youth, and that she still retains her original claim on his time, his thoughts, and his affections."

"What strange ideas you have! Did you gather them from the Scotch song of 'John Anderson my jo?'"

"I do not think that my ideas are at all strange, and I did not gather them from the Scotch song of 'John Anderson my jo,' but from the Marriage Service."

"The Marriage Service cannot command love when a complete change has taken place in a once loveable individual."

"Pardon me, Laura; the Marriage Service especially commands a man to continue to love and cherish his wife under all circumstances: these contingencies are generally defined under the head of 'for better for worse,' and the change wrought in poor Lady Glyndon is especially alluded to by the words 'in sickness and in health.'"

"Believe me, you misjudge Sir Henry; he is by no means an unkind or neglectful husband. Lady Glyndon has the best medical attendance in London, a highly-salaried companion, and faithful servants, and Sir Henry never allows a day to pass without going in person to inquire after her health."

"When I consider that Sir Henry's income is large, and that at least half it was derived from his wife, I am not disposed to give him any great credit for providing her with those luxuries which, in her case, are the necessaries of existence; the world in which, and for which, he lives, would severely reprobate him if he acted otherwise. Let me try you, Laura, by the test of the Golden Rule, and let me ask whether, if you were in Lady Glyndon's situation, you would feel satisfied with receiving the attentions of paid dependants, and only seeing

your husband for a few minutes every morning, well knowing at the same time that he spends several daily hours in pleasant circles of society, in which there is one 'bright particular star,' more attractive to him than all the rest?"

"Really, Katherine, I cannot practise the mental metempsychosis which you recommend. How can I, with my warm, enthusiastic feelings, put myself in the place of the stupid, soulless Lady Glyndon? I have no reason, moreover, to think that she knows or cares about her husband's attentions to me."

"I have the greatest reason, Laura, to think that she knows and cares about them. Although Lady Glyndon does not mix in general society, she still receives a few morning visitors; besides which her companion, Miss Hallett, and her waiting-woman, Johnson, are celebrated for their love of receiving and reporting gossiping communications."

"Really you seem to have made yourself intimately acquainted with the interior of Sir Henry's house!"

"I *have* done so, Laura, and I have done it for your sake; I have known and loved you since we were both children, and I have for some time determined to speak to you on a subject which you must be aware is already commented on by the world."

"I am not aware that the world has commented on the subject, at least not injuriously; a few harmless railleries may have passed on Sir Henry's obstinate determination to see perfection in everything that I say or do."

"Can those railleries, Laura, be harmless, which allude to a man's devoted attentions to a woman whom he has not the power of making his wife? However, I must not weary you by this long lecture, but take leave of you, requesting three things of you,—to examine your own heart; to mark the impression made on the world by your conduct; and to endeavour, difficult though it may be, to imagine yourself in the position of poor Lady Glyndon!"

Laura Clifton was as amiable as she was intelligent; although somewhat hurt by a few of Katherine's remarks, she was anxious to profit by them. She examined her own heart; but it was in a very cursory way, and she came to the conclusion that she valued Sir Henry Glyndon as a friend, but nothing more. Next, she made a feeble demonstration of coolness towards Sir Henry; but his earnest and sincere astonishment, and his vehement inquiries as to any possible cause of offence that he could have given her, soon dissolved the ice of Laura's manner, and the stream of cordiality flowed on as freely as ever. In regard to the opinion of the world, Laura suffered much less from it than is the case with the generality of persons who act an imprudent part in the great drama of society. Laura was so unassuming, so good-natured, so kind in her construction of the little faults and follies of her friends, so guiltless of ever saying impertinent or mortifying things to her acquaintance, that society repaid her amiability by averring that "Sir Henry Glyndon and Mrs. Clifton had certainly a great regard and esteem for each other, but that the character of both parties stood so high, that there could not be a doubt that their friendship was quite of a platonic description." There are, however, Lady Sneerwells and Sir Benjamin Backbites in every circle; and perhaps Laura might not long have remained unscathed by them, had not an unexpected event taken place a few weeks after the conversation in question,—the death of Lady Glyndon!

The invalid wives of fascinating husbands are generally remarkably tenacious of life, and Lady Glyndon, although old in constitution, and debilitated in appearance, was in reality little turned of six-and-thirty; she died, however, in the midst of every attention and luxury that money could procure, and her husband tried to put on a disconsolate countenance to match with his broad black crape hatband, and ordered a magnificent

monument to be erected to the memory of his dear departed wife in Kensall Green Cemetery.

"Sir Henry Glyndon has quite recovered his spirits since the death of his wife," said Laura Clifton to her friend Katherine, a few weeks after the above-mentioned event had taken place.

"I was not aware that he had ever lost them," said Katherine, coldly. "Do you think, Laura, that such indifference to the loss of a late wife betokens a flattering prospect to a future one?"

"I suppose," said Laura, laughing, "that you expect me to say to Sir Henry as Cleopatra did to Marc Antony:—

> 'Oh, most false love!
> Where be the sacred vials thou should'st fill
> With sorrowful water? Now I see, I see,
> In Fulvia's death, how mine received shall be!'"

"I certainly am of opinion," replied Katherine, "that you might think something of the same kind, and that such thoughts might be of great advantage to you on a future occasion. No doubt, Laura, you will have the offer of Sir Henry Glyndon's hand; but when you thoroughly and dispassionately reflect on what his character as a husband has been, let me hope that you will pause awhile before you trust your happiness in his keeping."

"Nay, Katherine, advice, like everything else, has its limits. I might listen to you [Laura had not listened to much purpose] when you spoke to me about receiving the attentions of a married man, but Sir Henry is now free, and certainly the world, of whose opinion you seem to stand in so much awe, can see nothing blameable in my marriage with him."

"Nothing blameable, certainly," said Katherine; "the doubt is, whether such an union would conduce to your happiness."

In due time Sir Henry made proposals to Mrs. Clifton; they were accepted, and the wedding-day fixed. Katherine sighed as she assumed the pale pink dress and rose-wreathed white chip bonnet of a bridemaid; and yet she had no occasion to sigh on her own account, for her lover had received his long-expected living, and in a few weeks she was to have bridemaids of her own, and to be adorned with orange-flowers as a bride: but she could not help feeling that trial was in store for her beloved friend; and when the handsome and triumphant bride-groom promised, in deep melodious tones, to take his charming bride "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death should part them," Katherine could not banish the thought from glancing across her mind, "But will he keep his promise, should he be put to the test?"

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Novelists and dramatists frequently take the liberty of skipping over a considerable portion of time. I am about to follow their example, and must beg to apprize my readers, before I again introduce them to Laura, that exactly five years have elapsed since she became Lady Glyndon. Laura was thirty years old on her second wedding-day, and it may reasonably be supposed that the lapse of five years could not have made much difference in her personal appearance; but Laura was changed from another reason than time, and she would scarcely have been recognised by any one who remembered her happy, sweet expression of countenance, on the day when she linked her fate for ever with that of Sir Henry Glyndon. A year of perfect happiness had succeeded to their marriage,—so happy, indeed, that Laura playfully said it put her in mind of a pretty tale by Leigh Hunt, entitled, "A Year of Honeymoons!" At the end of that time Laura's trial came,—the loss of the great boon of health. In the full prime of strength and activity, she con-

tracted so severe a rheumatic disorder, from the mere trifling imprudence of sitting on wet grass late in an autumnal evening, that she became a confirmed cripple ever afterwards. All that medical skill could do was done for her, but the use of her limbs was irretrievably gone. She whose feats in walking had been quite matter of history,—she who had ascended the Swiss mountains with sure foot and unshrinking courage,—she who had bounded through corn-fields with the swiftness of a Camilla, —she was a helpless cripple, unable to move even from the sofa to the window without assistance. Her general health, as may well be supposed, had also severely suffered; her colour had departed, her eyes had lost their brightness, and she had the appearance of being many years older than she was in reality. Let me also make the frank confession, that my heroine's temper had suffered. When she was full of health and spirits she had read "Life in the Sick-Room," and imagined that, as she was fond of literature, she should be able patiently and cheerfully to bear confinement, if called upon to do so; but "Life in the Sick-Room" was written by a single woman, and Laura Glyndon had a husband who valued his wife only inasmuch as she could gratify his pride and minister to his amusement. In the same elegantly-furnished apartment where the late Lady Glyndon had passed so many weary hours, the present Lady Glyndon was now reclining on a sofa; but she bore far more distressing indications of ill-health than her predecessor had done. Certainly no disorder was ever less romantic or interesting than that of rheumatism! A rheumatic patient may look pitiable, but cannot look pleasing; there is something abject in the total helplessness which it engenders, and the frequent attacks of acute pain generally give an expression of fretfulness to the countenance.

The second Lady Glyndon had not, like the former one, provided herself with a salaried companion; it gave her a severe

pang of humiliation when Miss Hallett came to beg for the situation, averring that "she should be the happiest of human beings, if permitted to show the same devotedness to her that she had done to the first dear Lady Glyndon!" Consequently, Laura passed many more solitary hours than her predecessor had done; and on the morning in question, having vainly attempted to derive any amusement from reading, her mind being too restless to fix itself on a book for more than a few minutes, she desired that morning visitors might be admitted.

Two ladies soon entered the room, who were received with very little cordiality by Laura; and yet there seemed nothing in their appearance to account for her coolness. Mrs. Methley, a quiet middle-aged lady, dressed in slate-coloured silk, was the *dame de compagnie* of Miss Tresilian, a handsome, accomplished young heiress, who had many suitors, attracted by herself as well as by her fortune. She was frank, lively, and warm-hearted, played and sang remarkably well, danced inimitably, and conversed with much fluency and vivacity. It is a difficult thing, however, to be a really good converser; that is, to have the tact of conversing with everybody on the subjects most likely to interest them: and Miss Tresilian, although, to do her justice, she was as good-natured as she was vivacious, was about as unsuited as Lord Biron, in "Love's Labour Lost," to be a fitting visitor in the chamber of sickness.

"How very much better you are looking, dear Lady Glyndon!" she exclaimed, not thinking that such was the case, but wishing to say something very agreeable to the poor invalid. "I am sure you would be quite well if you would only get a little more out into the open air. There is a flower-show in the Regent's Park to-day, where we mean to drop in for an hour or two: do let me persuade you to take a seat in my carriage."

The tears sprang in Laura's eyes when she thought of the

flower-shows that she had attended in gay, becoming attire, leaning on the arm of Sir Henry Glyndon.

"You are very good," she said; "but I only drive out in very quiet places, and a flower-show would be out of the question, as I am unable to walk even the shortest distance."

"I cannot help thinking," said the animated heiress, wishing to show the utmost interest in Lady Glyndon's health, "that you would be much better if you kept your rooms cooler. How can you endure a fire on such a warm day? This room is warmer than the Opera House was last night: is it not, Mrs. Methley?"

"A great deal warmer, my love," replied the calm, precise Mrs. Methley, who looked as if she had never been warm in her life.

"Cruvelli sang delightfully in the 'Sonnambula,' last night," pursued Miss Tresilian, "and played the character admirably. I quite trembled for her when she crossed the bridge, it seemed to require such a firm step; I am sure I could never do it: could you?" Lady Glyndon made no reply, and, fortunately, Miss Tresilian did not wait for one, but continued:—

"Then Caroline Rosati's dancing was exquisite; Sir Henry said she really seemed to float on air. I suppose Sir Henry told you how delightful an evening we passed?"

"I have not seen Sir Henry this morning," said Lady Glyndon, coldly.

"Speaking of music," said Miss Tresilian, "I have lately received a charming little present, the manuscript of a ballad not to be published for some days, full of natural, original melody: do you not think Lady Glyndon would be delighted with it, Mrs. Methley?"

"I am certain that Lady Glyndon would consider it an exquisite composition, my love," replied Mrs. Methley.

"I am fond of ballads," said Lady Glyndon; "but as I do

not go into society, my chance of hearing the one in question is very small, even when it is produced to the public."

"Oh!" exclaimed the good-natured heiress, "you shall hear it this moment if you please; I can play very well from recollection. Can I not, Mrs. Methley?"

"You can, indeed, my love, with the utmost ease and accuracy," replied that lady.

Miss Tresilian, being a beauty, an heiress, and abundantly gifted with accomplishments, had not an idea that she could do anything which might be construed into a liberty; and when she walked up to Laura's piano and opened it, she thought that she was really doing a kind, charitable action, in exercising her fine voice for the amusement of an invalid. Very charmingly did she sing the ballad in question, in those clear, fresh, ringing tones in which a ballad ought to be sung; the accompaniment was extremely rapid, but her white slender fingers did their duty actively, notwithstanding the jewelled rings with they were laden, and Laura could not refrain from an expression of admiration when she concluded.

"Your piano is somewhat out of tune, Lady Glyndon," said the lively young lady, returning to her seat. "I am afraid that I must lecture you on neglecting your music, like the generality of married ladies."

Here her speech came to an abrupt termination, for her eye fell on poor Laura's swollen and distorted fingers, and she felt, as she was very apt to do, that it would be well if she could learn to think before she spoke. She turned to a parcel of books on the table, just sent in from a neighbouring library, by way of changing the conversation.

"The 'Golden Legend,' by Longfellow!" she exclaimed. "Oh, Lady Glyndon, have you not yet read that delightful poem? Sir Henry recommended it to me some time ago. Let me just repeat to you his favourite passage. I soon learn by

heart anything that particularly interests me: do I not, Mrs. Methley?"

"You have peculiar quickness of study, my love," replied her accommodating friend.

Miss Tresilian, like most persons possessed of a fine musical ear, was sensible of the charm of melodious poetry, and she repeated the following passage with feeling, as well as distinctness and sweetness:—

> "The night is silent, the wind is still,
> The moon is looking from yonder hill
> Down upon convent, and grove, and garden;
> The clouds have passed away from her face,
> Leaving behind them no sorrowful trace,
> Only the tender and quiet grace
> Of one whose heart has been healed with pardon."

This was the severest mortification that Lady Glyndon had endured; there might be a reason why her husband should refrain from speaking to her about public amusements, of which she was unable to partake, but why should he not have brought Longfellow's beautiful poem to her? why not have read to her the exquisite passage which sounded so sweetly in her ears, even from the voice of a rival, but which would have sounded so far sweeter from that of her beloved husband? Her enjoyments were so few, that it seemed cruel to debar her from those which still remained to her, and she sighed deeply and sadly as these thoughts pressed on her mind.

"I see," remarked the disconcerted heiress, "that you do not like poetry. I ought to ask your pardon for troubling you with it. I am a great deal too apt to do things upon impulse: am I not, Mrs. Methley?"

"A great deal too apt, my love!" was on the lips of that assenting lady, but she changed the sentence in time to,—"You

always act upon the impulse of wishing to oblige your friends, my love, which is a very amiable one."

Miss Tresilian opened a portfolio of drawings that lay on the table, and, anxious to make atonement for any past mistakes, seized on one, at the foot of which was written "Laura Glyndon:" it had been done by Laura a few months after her marriage.

"Oh, Lady Glyndon!" she exclaimed, "how exquisitely you have executed this view from Switzerland! What delicacy! and yet what freedom of touch! How I wish I could do anything in this style. My drawings are all mere copies, quite stiff and formal, since they have been deprived of the magical finishing-touches of my drawing-master. It must be such a resource to you; time can never seem long to one who can make such an admirable use of the pencil."

Poor Laura! she would have been about as able to make a good use of the broadsword as of the pencil, in her afflicted state.

"This room is so full of various sources of employment and amusement," pursued the good-natured heiress, looking around her: "you have every solace, dear Lady Glyndon, in your invalid state. How sad, too, it would be for you, if you were unmarried! Sir Henry is so clever, so cheerful, such a delightful companion! Is he not, Mrs. Methley?"

"Sir Henry is one of the pleasantest gentlemen that I ever met with in my life, and it is a privilege to enjoy his society, my love," was the reply of the *dame de compagnie*, who spoke with much more animation than usual; for it suited her purpose that Miss Tresilian should prefer the society of a married to that of a single man, since, in the latter case, a speedy change of the domestic establishment of the heiress might ensue.

"Now, dear Lady Glyndon," said Miss Tresilian, "I must run away. I am sorry that I cannot stay any longer with you.

Pray, when you see Sir Henry, remind him not to come late to my house this evening. I have not a large formal party, but just such a little *réunion* as he likes, of about a dozen people, all famous for doing something or other better than it is done by people in general: are they not, Mrs. Methley?"

"Decidedly so, my love," answered Mrs. Methley; and the ladies took leave of Laura, who felt their departure a relief.

Miss Tresilian was good-natured and well-meaning, and would not willingly have inflicted a pang on any one, but, through want of tact and consideration, she was continually saying something which grated on the feelings of those around her. The Chinese have a saying, that "an unlucky word dropped from the tongue cannot be brought back again by a coach and six horses!" and certainly, no human power was likely to remove from poor Laura's memory the number of "unlucky words" which had that morning fallen from the rosy lips of the heiress.

The ladies had no sooner quitted the apartment than Laura, struck by a sudden thought, rang the little silver hand-bell by her side, which summoned her own woman from an adjoining room to her assistance—literally to her assistance, for Laura could not leave the sofa without aid. Supported by the arm of her servant, she reached the window. Miss Tresilian's carriage stood at the door; the ladies had not yet got into it, they were standing conversing with Sir Henry; and after a few minutes, during which Miss Tresilian seemed to be pressing some point with extraordinary animation on him, he handed them into the carriage, following them himself; and they drove off—doubtless to the flower-show. Laura returned to her sofa to shed bitter tears, not only because she contrasted her own helpless infirmity with the light, springing step of the graceful heiress, but because she felt convinced that her husband had been watching for the departure of his favourite, unwilling to purchase even the pleasure of her society at the expense of passing half-an-hour in the

room of his afflicted wife. Laura was almost immediately visited by another lady.

Mrs. Filmer was tolerably well connected, but her fortune was very small; she peculiarly delighted in making the acquaintance of invalids who moved in a grade of life rather superior to her own, and by dint of sympathy, flattery, and great adroitness in executing commissions, she generally contrived to make them believe that she was an invaluable and devoted friend to them, and that they were very ill-treated by everybody else. Mrs. Filmer entered the room with her usual stealthy step and velvet voice.

"Ah! dear Lady Glyndon," she exclaimed, "I need not ask how you feel—you are looking worse than ever: but I have brought something which I feel assured will do you good."

She placed in Lady Glyndon's hand, as she spoke, a printed paper, setting forth the virtues and properties of "Pulvermacher's Electro-Voltaic Chain," and forthwith began to descant on the innumerable cures which had been wrought by it.

"I have quite given up all hopes of a cure," said Laura, despondingly: "my affliction is now of four years' standing; all human aid has been tried, and I have nothing to do but to resign myself, as best I may, to the decrees of Providence."

"Yes, indeed, dear Lady Glyndon," said Mrs. Filmer, "you have need of resignation in every way. I have just met Sir Henry in Miss Tresilian's carriage; the manner in which she encourages Sir Henry to go about everywhere with her is perfectly insufferable."

"I would not wish Sir Henry to be a prisoner to the house because I am one," said Laura, a faint streak of crimson rising to her pale cheek as she spoke.

"Dearest Lady Glyndon, you are really too amiable, too good-natured!" said Mrs. Filmer.

Any one who had looked into poor Laura's countenance at

this moment, would certainly have considered Mrs. Filmer's assertion to be most unfounded.

"They are always together," continued Mrs. Filmer; "every one is talking of it; and the suitors of Miss Tresilian declare they can hardly ever win a word from her. And Mrs. Methley, of course, promotes any attachment that will keep her young patroness single."

"Attachment!" faltered Laura: "that is a strong word, Mrs. Filmer."

"My dear Lady Glyndon, what lady, qualified like Miss Tresilian to attract wooers, who have hands as well as hearts to offer, would ever devote herself to another woman's husband unless she was enamoured of him? I remember that at the balls of former days, before braided hair came in fashion, the girls used to declare that they would not dance their hair out of curl for a married man!"

"Still," said Laura, as former passages of her life seemed to press on her bewildered brain, "one would not wish to judge anybody harshly."

"I do not think it possible, Lady Glyndon, to judge any body too harshly, who engrosses the time and accepts the attention of a married man; especially when his wife is an invalid. A woman full of health and spirits, and able to go into society and watch the proceedings of her husband, might assert her own rights, and avenge her own wrongs; but there is something cowardly, as well as cruel, in usurping the privileges of a poor, pining prisoner, counting the slow hours in a dull, solitary chamber, while he, who ought to be her companion and solace, is seeking amusement in the cheerful houses of other people."

Mrs. Filmer was as unfortunate in her remarks as Miss Tresilian; she did not intend to offer any reproach to Laura—it was not her interest to do so: besides which, she had only known Laura since her affliction, and had never heard that she had been

acquainted with Sir Henry during the lifetime of his first wife. But conscience was busy with the second Lady Glyndon, as Mrs. Filmer's speech called up before her the image of the first Lady Glyndon, sad, spiritless, and deserted, while *she* was playing the part now performed by Miss Tresilian, and parading the truant husband in every society that she frequented; nay, she felt that she had been far more blameable than her rival, for her abilities were superior to those of Miss Tresilian, and she had possessed the advantage of a steady and faithful counsellor in Katherine Alford. She laid her poor aching head on her embroidered sofa-cushion, and burst into a convulsive flood of tears.

"Come, dear Lady Glyndon," said the officious visitor, who began to fear that she had gone too far, "do not give way to low spirits; you have nothing to blame yourself for, and no doubt Sir Henry will repent his folly in a little while, or Miss Tresilian will marry, and all will come right again."

A few more sentences passed between the ladies, principally relating to "Pulvermacher's Electro-Voltaic Chain," and Mrs. Filmer took her departure, soon to be succeeded by a very different visitor.

Katherine Alford, now Mrs. Stanton, was in London with her husband for a few weeks. Katherine was a happy wife, and the five years which had wrought so lamentable a change in Laura had rather improved her appearance; her countenance retained its serenity, and had acquired an expression of cheerfulness, in which it was once deficient. Katherine was well acquainted with her friend's trials and troubles, she had been the sympathising hearer of her sorrows during her frequent visits to London, and on one occasion Katherine had even dared the difficult task of remonstrating with Sir Henry on his neglect of his suffering wife. Sir Henry met her remarks with the coolest and most imperturbable good-breeding.

"He must confess he was somewhat surprised that Mrs.

Stanton should see anything to censure in his conduct; if any sacrifice of time or money on his part could restore Lady Glyndon to health, he should be most willing to make it; he feared, however, that her affliction was not to be removed; it was a severe trial to him, and many men so circumstanced would be apt to seek solace in foreign travel: such was not his inclination; he constantly remained in the same house with his wife, the amusements of which he partook were quiet and intellectual, the few friends and acquaintance with whom he associated were persons whose respectability would stand the test of the strictest inquiry; he always spoke of Lady Glyndon in terms of the highest respect, and had provided nobly for her in his will; he was sorry that Mrs. Stanton disapproved of the course he was pursuing, but he did not think that she would be able to pursuade the world to agree with her in her strictures."

This was Katherine Stanton's first and last attempt to work a reformation in Sir Henry Glyndon.

Katherine perceived that Laura was in peculiarly low spirits, and she was soon made acquainted by her with the events of the morning.

"I can imagine, dear Laura," she said, "that you feel grieved and mortified; but reflect, I entreat you, that nothing has in reality happened to render your position a more painful one—it is only that the disadvantages of it happen accidentally to have been more than usually brought before you: try, Laura, to look hopefully to the future."

"Ah! Katherine," replied her friend, "I would rather try to forget the past."

"You have repented of the past," said Katherine; "why, then, so continually recall it?"

"I cannot but recall it," answered Laura. "I cannot but think of the time when, in the thoughtless hardihood of health and gaiety, I declared that it was impossible for me to fancy

myself in the situation of the deserted Lady Glyndon. Now, alas! how exactly do I realize it! I bear the same name—I inhabit the same apartment—I experience, like her, in the prime of life, the infirmities and more than the infirmities of old age—I mourn, like her, over the neglect of the unloving husband, who leaves me in sickness and sorrow while he enjoys the society of the healthful and happy;—every tear that I made her shed, every pang that I gave her heart, is doubled to myself."

"Sir Henry may yet return to a sense of his duties," said Katherine.

"Never to me," replied Laura. "I was the means of drawing him from his former duties; I encouraged the attentions which he ought to have bestowed alone on his wife; I listened while he talked of friendship, of congeniality of mind, of innocence of intention, of freedom from actual wrong. Sir Henry Glyndon's manner during the lifetime of his wife was never wanting in respect towards me, nor was mine failing in needful reserve towards him: but, Katherine, I knew that he loved me, yet I did not repulse or shun him; and is it for me to be his monitor who was formerly his tempter? I deserve all that I endure: it is fit that I should suffer for my misdeeds."

"But, dear Laura," said Katherine, "the affliction with which it has pleased Providence to visit you, might have attacked you under any circumstances."

"Undoubtedly it might," answered Laura; "but had I been united to a man of good principles and kind feelings, my affliction would only have endeared me to him; he would have felt that the law of God bound us together, and that he must support my burdens as his own: from Sir Henry I could not expect such kindness; I knew from experience that it was not in his nature to bestow it: I have 'sown the wind,' and I 'reap the whirlwind.'"

Katherine, after remaining an hour with her friend, took her

departure, and Laura eagerly awaited the usual visit of her husband: she waited, however, in vain; the flower-show, a club-dinner, and Miss Tresilian's little evening party, completely occupied him during that day; but he sent a polite excuse to his wife, and a message of inquiry respecting her health. The hours passed wearily with Laura till ten o'clock, when, suffering more severely than usual both from bodily and mental pain, she was assisted by her attendant into her chamber, and endeavoured to rest. Sleep, however, was as coy and unfriendly to her as it is very apt to be to people under similar circumstances; continually did she seem to picture to herself the cheerful, pleasant party in Miss Tresilian's drawing-room, the brilliant lamps, the joyous laugh, the sweet music. She heard the deep, rich tones of her husband's voice, mingling with the clear, melodious notes of Miss Tresilian; she saw him bend over her chair, he whispered softly and winningly to her, while she smiled and cast her sparkling eyes on the ground. Poor Laura! how well could she image those scenes! how short a time did it seem since she had been an actress in them! Then, again, the late Lady Glyndon, weeping and desolate, dwelling sadly on the attractions of the charming rival who was engrossing the society of her husband, arose before her. She tried to repeat some of the texts of Scripture with which her memory was well stored, but all appeared to escape from her when she most stood in need of them. One text only haunted her mind, and seemed to ring perpetually in her ears;—these were its awful words:—

"WITH WHAT MEASURE YE METE, IT SHALL BE MEASURED TO YOU AGAIN!"

THE FALL OF THE LEAVES.

FROM THE FRENCH OF MILLEVOYE, BY MADAME DE CHATELAIN.

The woods now wear their autumn hue,
The yellow leaf is on the ground,
The songster's notes are rare and few,
And every blast that moans around
Is fading Nature's sad adieu.
Sad like her, and dying too,
A sickly youth with falt'ring gait
Has come once more the wood to view,
He trod in boyish glee elate.

"Farewell, lov'd wood! farewell, I die!
Your saddened tints become my gloom,
And ev'ry leaf that's whirled from high
Seems but the presage of my doom.
A fatal oracle has said:
'Once more the leaves shall yellow grow
Before thine eyes, ere thou'rt laid low.
The shades of death around thy head
Are gathering fast their chilly dews—
Pale as the palest autumn hues
Thou'rt drooping t'wards thy mossy bed.
Thy youth will pass away and fade
Before the meadow's grassy blade—
Before the vine its leaves hath shed.'

And I must die! its icy blast
Some fatal wind hath o'er me blown,
My winter is approaching fast,
Although my spring has scarcely flown.
Like some young plant nipped by the wind
A few fair blossoms decked my head—
But ah! my sickly verdure's shed,
Nor left a single fruit behind.
Fall, fall, thou short-lived, rustling leaf,
'Gainst morn this dreary pathway hide—
In pity to a mother's grief
Conceal the spot where I must bide.
But should my lov'd one, lorn and pale,
At even seek the silent vale,
Upon my lonely grave to weep,
Then wake my shade from out its sleep,—
Such tears to soothe must still avail."

He spoke—then sped his weary way,
And the last leaf has marked his doom
By falling on his dying day.
But never did the maiden come
To weep upon her lover's mound,—
And, save the herd's, no footstep's sound
The echo of the vale awakes;
And naught the silence ever breaks
That hovers round that lonely tomb.

A CHAPTER ON FIRST LOVES.

BY M. A. POWER.

I BELIEVE, speaking from my own experience, that there are few things a man would find it more difficult to do than to state distinctly, whether to himself or to any one else, who was that

"Greenest spot on mem'ry's waste,"

his first love. Which among us has not had a "little wife" in a pinafore, toddling by his side, with whom he shared his sticky barley-sugar and broken toys; whom he loved differently and better than his sisters; of whose baby infidelities he had real fits of jealousy; with whom he quarrelled on not more childish grounds than he has since quarrelled a dozen times with a love of larger growth, and with whom he was then as glad as now to "kiss and make friends?" Who has not, in early school-boy days, loved with bashful fervour a Miss Shepherd, at Miss Nettingall's establishment for young ladies, with perhaps occasional diversions in favour of the Misses Brown, Jones, and Robinson, he met when he came home for the holidays? Who has not, when he arrived at being an upper boy, been suddenly seized with a distaste of such juvenile attractions, and plunged over head and ears into a wild and frenzied passion for a woman, who might quite or very nearly be his mother?—whose shadow he haunts, in whose presence he always yearns to be, though he

is extremely uncomfortable there; to whom it is his most earnest desire to reveal his love, though he would sooner die than whisper to her a word of it; and before whom he feels like a detected culprit if he imagine that any look or sign, or blush or sigh, has betrayed to the idol an inkling of the state of his feelings? Who, we say, has come to man's estate without passing through all or some of these phases of the tender passion, and to which of the objects of these passing preferences does he feel he ought, in sincerity, attach the title of his "first love?"

The question is a difficult one, but, after much consideration, I think I have been able to resolve it.

The title of "first love" ought, it seems to me, to apply to the woman who first excites in the breast of the youthful adorer some more definite idea of affection, of constancy, of companionship, of the *realities* of mutual love and confidence, of thoughts, and plans, and cares for the future, than the vague, aimless, romantic longings, that the boy is ready to attach to every creature that wears a petticoat, between fifteen and thirty, be she princess or peasant;—the woman to whom he first feels emboldened to express his sentiments in a somewhat tangible form, whom he first contemplates in the light of a helpmate for man; not as a sort of etherial being between a sylph of the air, a goddess, and a shepherdess of the school of the poets and painters of the seventeenth century—creatures eternally clad in white muslin and blue ribbons, living, like the transformed princes in the fairy tale, on no aliments more substantial than love and spring water, and whose winter existence remains a mystery yet unfathomed by man, as they were never seen or heard of in any other costume than the one described (except in France, where, in the days of Watteau and Boucher, they indulged in brocades and laced bodices), in any other atmosphere than in that of midsummer, or in any other localities than glades and

groves and bowers, which Nature decorated with all sorts of choice fruits and flowers for their especial delectation.

Heaven knows, that even when these somewhat more rational ideas begin to form themselves, they are yet, in general, far enough from the realities of every-day life; far more unselfish, and generous, and disinterested; far more trusting, and impulsive, and uncorrupt: but, alas! for that very reason, far more unsuited to the exigencies and interests of the work-a-day world, through which man has to fight his way, often at the sacrifice of all the golden dreams of his boyhood and early youth.

The fact that hardly any of us arrive at the passionately-desired consummation of marrying our first loves, is a sufficient proof of this, than which no stronger need be required; and, taking the world as it is, it is probably better, in nine instances out of ten, that it should be so: nay, perhaps in any case this remark, as a general rule, may apply.

And now to a free confession of my own experience on the subject of what I, at the time, fully believed to be a most genuine first love. I had passed through all the phases of baby and childish adoration; at five years old, I had bestowed my heart on a little flaxen-curled roly-poly a year younger, with whom I made acquaintance and sand-castles on the beach at Cowes. I remember she was called Bessy, but what her other name was I never knew, nor whence she came, nor whither she went when the season was over: for several weeks I wrote her letters in characters that neither Champollion nor Belzoni would ever have had the remotest chance of deciphering, on slates and scraps of paper, but as I never took any measures to send them I was the less surprised at her not answering my epistles, and by degrees the memory of Bessy faded from my heart.

It would overtax my reader's patience and my own recollections to go through the list that followed within the next thirteen years; in fact, the impressions they have left are nearly

as heterogeneous and confused as the collection of souvenirs that remained of them, consisting of withered roses, violets, and forget-me-nots (the latter especially) in abundance; broken sandals, knots of ribbon, bon-bon mottoes, a shattered fan, odd gloves, an embroidered handkerchief, two or three scented notes, as many locks of hair, a worked cigar-case—(fatal gift! next day I bought half-a-dozen "real Havannahs" to put in it, and made myself frightfully sick with smoking the first)—a hair chain, a blood-stone seal with "Annie" engraved thereon, and a variety of other articles too numerous to be here detailed.

By this time, as the arithmetical reader will perceive, I had arrived at the age of eighteen, and, despite that neither the senses of touch nor vision could satisfy me as to the necessity of shaving, I considered myself every whit a man. My peculiar position, being an orphan and but very little looked after by my guardian, an uncle, who, having half-a-dozen grown-up children of his own, found quite enough to do to take care of them, aided this illusion, by giving me a degree of independence few lads of my age could command; and being an only child, pretty well provided with pocket-money, having pretty good prospects, and being, consequently, much sought after by the *élite* of the society of L——, my native town, I had altogether as fair a chance of becoming a provincial coxcomb as any young man could possibly boast of possessing.

About this time an old friend of my father's came to L——, to visit my uncle. Mr. Harley was a physician, an old bachelor, who, having obtained by his practice an income amply sufficient to supply not only his wants but his tastes, had abandoned the most arduous part of his profession, and to a moderate extent indulged himself in the life he delighted in—studying art, going occasionally into society, visiting his friends in the country, reading, shooting, fishing, sketching,—carrying wherever he went a warm, kind, generous heart, a bright intelligence, excellent

spirits, a genial disposition, an inexhaustible fund of information, dealt out always *à propos* and never with pretension, and an unsullied character. Such a man could not fail to inspire in me a double portion of the admiration and regard he everywhere excited, and naturally fond of young people, and warmly attached to the memory of both my parents, he showed for me a peculiar degree of kindness and good will which quite captivated me; and when, as his visit drew to a conclusion, he invited me to return with him for a time to London, I considered myself one of the happiest of mortals.

"Now, my dear boy," said Mr. Harley, as we sat together at breakfast in his comfortable study, the morning after our arrival in Bolton Street, "I will introduce you to some half-dozen houses of my friends, where I am sure you will always be welcome, and meet such society as is likely to be agreeable and useful to you. This will, I think, be more pleasant and more advantageous to you than if I took you in all my rounds, where you would often find yourself thrown among people little suited to your age and tastes, without having time among so many to cultivate acquaintance with any in particular."

This arrangement agreed upon, we started at two o'clock on a round of visits, and at each house, thanks to Mr. Harley's kind expressions and personal popularity, I was most cordially received, and at the last, Mrs. Willesden's, invited to a ball given on the following evening.

Among my other foibles, dear reader, I must confess to you, that at that time the love of dress held a most conspicuous place, and between my own taste and that of the tailor at L——, who never ventured upon any extraordinary cut of coat or brilliant pattern of waistcoat without manifold solemn asseverations that it was the very latest mode as imported from London or Paris, my wardrobe displayed a variety of garments, the fashion of which I now half blush to recall. Of course, on

this memorable occasion I selected the most gorgeous waistcoat, the most elaborately embroidered shirt, the most brilliant pins, rings, and chains, in my collection; and perfumed with the choicest essences, and curled like a poodle, I, in my blessed ignorance of London ways and London hours (Mr. Harley dined out that day, so that I had no one to criticise my costume or enlighten my innocence as to *les bienséances* in other matters), arrived in Berkeley Square just as the rooms were being lighted, and Mrs. Willesden with her hair dressed, but the rest of her toilet supplied only by a white dressing-gown, was superintending the arrangement of some flowers in the ball-room. This was a bad beginning, and notwithstanding her polite greeting, I felt horribly embarrassed and intensely ashamed of myself,—a feeling which was in nowise decreased by the instinctive consciousness that the servants, as they went to and fro in their occupations during the ensuing half hour, were viewing with contemptuous mockery the rustic youth who was vainly striving to conceal his sense of his extremely false position, by appearing to read a two-days' old "Times," left by chance on the drawing-room table, and trying to conciliate the good graces of a lap-dog, which snarled defiance at all his attempted caresses. At last Mrs. Willesden, fully attired, descended, and guests began to drop in. The first only added to my confusion, as I fancied they must have some consciousness of my *gaucherie;* and with the presumptuous modesty that always persuades bashful people into the conviction of their being the objects of general remark, I imagined that they, like the servants, must be laughing in their sleeves at my early advent: more especially as (owing, no doubt, to my resplendent costume) many of them directed at me glances in which I fancied I perceived latent traces of amusement. As the number of visitors increased, this source of annoyance gave way to another—the sensation of being wholly alone and out of place among crowds perfectly at their ease and at home, and

who, if any of them thought of me at all, saw I was by no means so. Mrs. Willesden came to my aid as soon as the duty of receiving her guests set her free to do so, and after a few introductions left me to make my way. But it would not do; my first *bévue*, my youth, my rusticity, my total ignorance of the topics of interest, the modes of life, the habits and ideas of the persons with whom I found myself, and last, not least, the sort of pretension evident in my unfortunate dress, were all so many obstacles in the way of my making myself a place in this new world. Many of the fair, self-possessed, easy-mannered girls to whom I was presented, recollected engagements for any number of dances to come; others glided through one quadrille without our having exchanged three sentences; others tried me on various topics, but failing to *lier conversation* in any consecutive form, gave up the attempt in despair; and at last, heartily disgusted with my non-success, I felt much disposed to retire, when an old lady of portly form, on whose flounce I had trodden, and with whom I had made something like an acquaintance by her gracious acceptance of my embarrassed apologies, offered to introduce me to her daughter, who just then came up on the arm of her last partner.

Miss Halsden was a young lady who essentially came under the denomination of buxom: she had rather a handsome face, highly coloured; a square, robust form; arms and hands whose muscles told of a degree of physical force rarely bestowed on the softer sex; a determined look; a strong voice, and an immense flow of conversation. She was very tall, and her movements partook of the energy of her character, which was quite formed; her age being somewhere about —— I don't know whether on the right or wrong side of thirty. She rode, fenced, and played billiards—as I very soon learned—like a professor of any of those arts; liked the smell of cigars and the stable; studied the pedigrees of celebrated horses; could row a boat and bring

down a pheasant with most men: in short, her list of accomplishments would have done honour to any masculine member of the community. I fancy I see her now, as in reply to my timid invitation she stood up to dance; her figure drawn to its full height; her bust, which, contrary to the custom of evening attire, was covered with some contrivance whose name I know not, but which looked on her like a corslet or cuirass, squared; her powerful hands employed in dragging on a pair of gloves, large in themselves, but not for her; her muscular arms extended to their full length downwards to aid the effort—a perfect specimen of the genus Amazon as it exists in the nineteenth century.

I began by feeling considerably afraid of Miss Frederica Halsden. Soon her perfect ease and freedom from anything like shyness or restraint communicated itself in part to me, and I thought her very agreeable; later, her bold black eyes and her prowess excited my admiration; and before the evening came to an end, I was more over head and ears in love with her than I had ever been in my life before. From that moment I became her shadow; wherever she went I followed, for she never failed to keep me *au courant* of her movements, and to procure me invitations to the houses where I was a stranger. Oh, the parties to Greenwich and Richmond, to which we generally went on horseback, while the rest drove! Oh, the visits to the Zoological Gardens, where she delighted to see the beasts at feeding-time! Oh, the cigaritos smoked together in moonlight rows (pronounced *without* sounding the *w*) on the river! Oh, the bets lost and won, and the cold *pâtés* and champagne demolished with her at races! Oh, the interchange of sentiments on the merits of horses and dogs! Oh, the pistol practice! Oh, the billiard matches! In a fortnight from our first meeting, Frederica Halsden and I were affianced, and had exchanged love-tokens,—a hunting-whip, with a gold fox's head

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L. Taylor

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at the end on the one side, and a small six-barrelled pistol on the other.

How long this blissful trance lasted, I can hardly tell,—perhaps a fortnight,—it may have been three weeks,—when one day, as I was dressing to go to visit my Dulcinea, I received a message from Mr. Harley to say he wished to see me in his study, as soon as I could conveniently descend. I had an instinctive and most unpleasant suspicion of the cause of this demand. With a certain *défiance* which I had never sought to analyse, but had fully entertained, of his opinion of the step I had taken, I had put off mentioning the subject, or even pronouncing the name of my fair enslaver, till some favourable opportunity, which I carefully avoided seeking, should present itself of declaring my sentiments and intentions; and it was with a beating heart and unsteady hand that I completed my toilet and proceeded to the interview. Mr. Harley, as I entered, looked annoyed, but instantly resuming his usual kind and cheerful voice and manner, he began without further preparation.

"My dear boy, I have just heard a report, which I do not believe, but which I think it right to mention to you, to the effect that you have bestowed your heart and promised your hand to a lady,—I will not say a *young* lady, as I have known her a grown-up girl some fifteen or sixteen years,—whose age, position, antecedents, and manners, render her wholly unfitted for a wife for you, even admitting the absurd proposition that you, at eighteen, stood in need of such a relationship. Mind, I do not mean to impugn the honour of Miss Halsden. I have no reason to suspect that she has ever fallen into those errors to which the weaker and softer of her sex are but too often liable; but in the society into which she has been admitted in consideration of the respectability of her father's family—the unhappy position of her mother, a woman of low origin but harmless conduct, early left a widow with narrow income—and the good-

natured disposition of the daughter, whose eccentricities are more ridiculous than blameable, she is universally known as a notorious husband-hunter, ready to pounce upon every innocent youth as her lawful prey, and the heroine of more matrimonial *fiascos* than any woman, perhaps, of her age in London. I tell you this, my dear Philip, to put you on your guard against giving anything like countenance to such an absurd rumour; and now, as I see you are going out, and I, too, have an appointment, I will say adieu till dinner."

So saying, Mr. Harley shook hands, and hurrying off, left me breathless and overwhelmed to digest this pleasing communication. Of course I ought, in true chivalric blindness and *entêtement*, to have utterly refused credence to every syllable of it; and had I been asked, I should have sworn as much: but I could not help believing it from beginning to end; the very coolness and *légerté* of Mr. Harley's tone and manner,—of course, as I afterwards felt, assumed on purpose,—carried with them ten thousand times more of conviction than the most solemn severity could have done; and the sentence, "I have known her a grown-up girl some fifteen or sixteen years,"—that is to say, since I was in the nursery,—threw more ridicule over the whole affair than any other consideration in the world, perhaps, could have done. To a lad of my age, the idea of a woman of thirty was connected with nothing but associations of far-advanced old maidenhood or very ripe matronism; and the notion that the goddess of my idolatry might have dandled me on her knee, placed such a gulf between us that I felt I could not face it.

There had been from the beginning so little of what could be called sentiment in my imaginary passion, and, to do her justice, so little pretence of any tenderness on the part of Frederica, that there was far less of the disenchantment of a love-sick swain in my disappointment, than the mortification of a man who

feels he has placed himself in a singularly false position, without having the least idea of how to get out of it. What was to be done? After long consideration, I felt that the only alternative, painful though it was, was to place myself in Mr. Harley's hands, and leave it to him to get me out of the scrape. That night the step was taken, and his promise given that my word should be redeemed without a tinge of discredit or reproach to my name, on condition I should return to L—— within two days, without again seeing, or in any way communicating with, Frederica.

The following morning he brought me back the hunting-whip.

"Keep this, Philip," he said, "in memory of a foolish adventure and a fortunate escape. You are free. On representing to Miss Halsden and her mother, that instead of your possessing, as they believed, a large fortune, you would come into but a very moderate income; that you would not, according to the tenor of your father's will, become possessed of that before you were four-and-twenty,—six years hence,—and that in the mean time your family and friends would adopt every means to keep you apart from her, and your uncle would not hear of any such engagement, Miss Frederica, with tolerably good grace, consented to resign you; bid me tell you she owed you no ill-will, and said she would always have a regard for you, for, though you were a little spoony, you had a good deal of pluck."

Thus ended the dream of the one, among my many "first loves," which had any likelihood of coming to a serious conclusion. It made me, certainly, more careful; and when I *did* arrive at the sentiment that might seriously merit the name, its object was the antipodes of Frederica Halsden.

THE ALPHABET.

TO MADAME VESTRIS, BY THE LATE JAMES SMITH, ESQ.

THOUGH not with lace bedizened o'er
From James's and from Howell's,
Ah! don't despise us twenty-four
Poor consonants and vowels.
Though critics may your powers discuss,
Your charms applauding men see,
Remember you from four of us
Derive your X. L. N. C. J. S.

Dec. 28, 1834.

MADAME VESTRIS'S ANSWER TO "THE ALPHABET."

BY J. R. PLANCHÉ.

DEAR friends, although no more a dunce
Than many of my betters,
I'm puzzled to reply at once
To four-and-twenty letters.

Perhaps you 'll think that may not be
So hard a thing to do;
For what is difficult to me
Is A, B, C, to you.

However, pray dismiss your fears,
Nor fancy you have lost me;
Though many, many, bitter tears
Our first acquaintance cost me!

Believe me, till existence ends,
Whatever ills beset you,
My oldest literary friends,
I never can forget you! E. V.

Dec. 29, 1834.

WILD FLOWERS AND THEIR USES.

BY MRS. WHITE.

Charity, methinks, never took a fairer form, nor one more beautifully practical, than that which emanated from the ancient art of simplery. From the gathering of the roscid leaves and buds, to the dispensing of the healthful draughts and cooling ointments, all was feminine, graceful, and benignant. And though the world may laugh, and the fashion be obsolete, we have sufficient faith in the science to believe that, even in these days, women might serve and be served by a knowledge, the practice of which not only expanded the heart, and gave activity and a purpose to its sympathies, but made acquaintance with the fairest works of God a necessity, exercise a matter of course, and the things met with in the way occasions for discursive but most *teachful* talking.

Modern botany, interesting as it is, still lacks, as women ordinarily learn it, that which can alone render a study compensating—utility. There is no aim in it beyond the knowledge of *genera* and *classes;* but to those who acquaint themselves with flowers, not simply for their beauty, or because botany savours of the schools,

> "Who pierce
> With vision pure into their secret stores
> Of health, and life, and joy,"

there is an interest in them far superior to that afforded by the mere knowledge of their exterior characteristics; and besides, the study adds additional aims to existence — aims that now

only exist in exceptional cases, and yet are, to a certain degree, free to all.

Is it for us to seal with wilful ignorance wells of sweet water, and then complain of the dryness of the path?

How many ladies, in their occasional visits to the country, find, when the freshness of their surroundings has passed away, intolerable monotony in paths that at first delighted them, and objects that primarily pleased! Though beauty in a hundred flower-shapes gem the fields and hang about the hedge-rows, though they walk on turfy carpets under green canopies of sheltering trees, though the air be balm and the sky all brightness, yet if these charms be only felt through the medium of the external senses, when these have palled there is nothing left to re-create an interest in them.

But how differently are those situated who have made of these sweet ministrants to rural pleasures a study or an art, who recognise the disposition of a plant by its place of growth, and know at sight its hidden attributes! how

> "In the rind of each small flower
> Poison hath residence; and medicine power."

For them hedgerows and heaths, waysides, and woods and meadows, are full of mingled interest and delight. Intelligences, hid from other eyes, beam on them from the open ones of flowers; and every wilding blossom has its story, its holy legend, or poetic lore, keeping it fresh with dews of Hippocrene.

At all seasons, from that in which the first snowdrop (the *perce-neige* of the French), the "snow-flake" of old Gerard, lifts up its little *sacring* bell above the frozen altar of the earth, to bid us know the consecrated time of spring, and hope approaches, till the last leaf waves upon the sered oak and all the forest roots are wrapped in mosses, there are abundant recreations abroad for the simpler and botanist;—inducements

to exercise and research, trifling, indeed, to the uninitiated, but to the gentle, hopeful, all-inquisitive nature, which the love and study of flowers educates, full of most charming interest.

A new variety (though it be but so in seeming), a character unmarked, a plant unfound by them before, wakes up a higher sense of pleasure than the treasure-seeker feels in fresh-found veins of Californian gold.

For them May, with her mosaic of mingled flowers, brings a whole month of joy. Those flowery masks, the orchideæ, are out, and play in groves and woods, high, arid places, and in richest pastures; their floral pastorals, now mimeing it in figure of a fly, now basking in the sun "a red-hipped humble bee."

For them, the silent pools and slow-paced rivers re-float upon their limpid surfaces the flowery coronals that long ago maidens were wont to crown them with, in honour of their haunting Naiades.

Here the *Ranunculus aquatalis* lays out her snowy flowers, like crowding water-nymphs on a green raft. There the water-violet (*Hottonia palustris*) sends up its solitary stalks and delicate flesh-coloured corollas, a floral beacon above a sunken reef of fringy leaves; while all Ophelia's flowers, her stranded garland of "crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples," strew their margins. For them the filmy crests of cotton-grass, shining like tassels of spun-glass in the sun, trace forth the winter's worn-out watercourses; and in the same moist neighbourhood the golden cups of *Caltha* (marsh marigold) glitter above its heart-shaped, dark-green leaves, in brilliant contrast with the turquoise hue of the veronica (*Humifusa*), which lifts like Truth its clear round eyes unwinkingly to heaven.

They have no need of other calendar than that the earth sets forth. Gold-letter days are marked for them in flowers, and every feast hath its particular bud, noting it on their floral rosary.

They know "Lent lilies" (*Pseudo-narcissus*), sacred to the Virgin, come with Candlemas, lending their yellow light to Christian shrines, as they were wont to do on Pagan altars when Proserpina claimed them.

The scented, silken aglets of the ozier, herald Palm Sunday's advent; and the pale transformed nymph (*Anemone*), the Pasque flower of France, opens in groves and thickets, on heathy ground and chalky pastures, its solitary blossoms in honour of the Paschal festival. But it is during the summer solstice that the earth is richest in these floral treasures, and the reminiscences of the herbalist most active. Then,

> "Whether he steals along the lonely dale
> In silent search, or through the forest rank,
> With what the dull, incurious, weeds account;"

or loiters by a "lily-paven" stream, or where the corn-fields, like some human hearts, sigh after the impossible, and shadow the green sea-waves within their restless breasts, beauty lies thick around him; the grass is veined with flower gold; the waysides frescoed by invisible hands in living colours; and all the still wood-paths and shadowy places perfumed with floral essences, and hung, as when a king goes by, with votive garlands. In these dim, tangled spots, their beauty comes so close, it touches him; and, like the palpable and breathing presence of one we love, impenetrates with pleasure.

Later still, and on the chalky hills, the fair stars of the lowly *Helianthus* (rock-rose) light up the foot-track to the upper downs, where heath-bells dally with the autumn winds; and Eyebright, Milton's euphrasy, potent now as in the blind bard's days to "purge the visual nerve" and clear the brain, lifts up its dark-green leaves and delicately-pencilled corollas, above an under-ground of purple thyme.

> "Health floats amid the genial atmosphere,"

tepid with summer heats, and transfused with the scented breath of flowers; and amidst this lavishment of ornament, this luxury of redolence, retones the mind with a recognition of utility, and bids us look beyond this outward beauty to a grander purpose, since vegetation and its breeze-disseminated essences are part of Nature's fair economy and purify the air.

Here, then, like the Friar of Verona, the simpler fills his "ozier basket," not with baleful weeds, but "precious-juiced flowers," knowing them patent. "Many for virtues excellent, none but for some, and yet all different."

Returning to the meads, he seeks

> "The pale, faint water-flowers, that pave
> The oozy bottoms of clear lakes and pools,"

and which (like those that float upon their surfaces) were held in ancient days under the cold dominion of the moon, and by their soothing properties were said to calm the brains of frenzied persons, and bring them peace and rest: gifts such as angels might bring down from heaven and be the purer for. The delicate *Morsus ranæ* (frog-bit), with its pellucid triple petals of frozen hue, melting like snow in the hand, and haunted in the rosy flush of eve by swarms of silver-winged, diminutive moths, is not less potent in these attributes than that most lovely of our native nymphæa the water-lily, which lifts its Naiad cup, whiter "than Leda's love," between its heart-shaped, thick, green leaves, soon after the sun's rising, and slowly vanishes — a floral Undine under the surface of its limpid home at night.

Beside the same still rivers the water-iris (*Pseudo-acorus*) sets up its yellow flags and sword-shaped leaves, and keeps its watch, where the blue-flowering brooklime, "like a nymph to the bath addrest," stands mid-deep in the shallows.

In bye-gone days the venders of watercresses, those repre-

sentatives of the running brooks and streamlets on the City pavements, were wont to add its fair sprays to their merchandise, which were eaten freely, and with the same medicinal intention, as the former plant; and it is still sold by the herb-woman in Scotland, under the pretty name of "water-purples."

Here, too, the cordial water-mint (*Mentha aquatica*) uplifts its scented leaves and whorled-grey flowers; and the glazed cups of the *Ranunculus flammula* glow with martial juices.

In grassy meads underlined with golden king-cups, purpled with knap-weed, and snowed over with the fair orbs of the great moon-daisy, the crimson-headed sorrel, potent when Gerard wrote to refresh the overspent and fainting spirits, and full of thirst-allaying acid, sways its tall stems in the sun, hiding from year to year its grateful uses, which, like the plant they dwell in, are perennial.

Knowledge, whatever be its nature (like many other priceless things), takes up so little space, that it is no burden to carry with us even in the hot noon of an æstival day: but the knowledge of our sweet subject, like the support and converse of a beloved companion, makes dull paths pleasant, and shortens weary ones.

If we be read in classic poetry and mythic lore, so much the richer we; for then their voices speak to us from the earth, as the stars are said to sing in heaven, and whisper to us as we pass along the stories that old Delphic priests and Corybantes, and, later still, cowled monks and friars, have hieroglyphicked in their varied blossoms. The springing corn-fields would be reminiscent of young Adonis, whose fabled blood-drops sprinkle with solitary scarlet flowers the dark-green finely-multified leaves of pheasants' eye, the "rose a rubic" of London women when old Turner wrote, and which is still cried through our streets about Rogation week, the season of the Roman Ambarvalia, under the name of "red morocco!"

In summer's noon, when poppies (*Papaver rhœas*) wave red ensigns amidst the speared ranks of the cereal fields, and purple corn-cockle, and golden marigolds, and radiant flowers of the great white ox-eye, shine here and there amongst their undulating masses, we should recognise the blue eyes of *Cyanus* in the so-called "hurt-sickle" of ancient reapers, the bright-rayed blue-bottle, with which—like the white-robed acolytes in the processions of Ceres—we wreathed our brows in the fair days of childhood.

Later still, and the legendary fragments of "Venus' looking-glass" would be found (according to the elder herbalists) glittering in corn-fields in the South.*

And where "lush honeysuckles, ripened by the sun," and wild clematis, and our "ladies' seal," run hand-in-hand along the tangled hedge-rows—those breathing forth to every passing breeze delicious fragrance, this hiding within its root and vine-shaped, hoar, rough leaves, and tiny signets, as rich a dower of healthful attributes as these possess in essences and beauty; there comes up the fair "archangel" (*Lamium album*), with dark serrated leaves and dead-white labiate flowers, looking as coldly delicate in June as when the snows of March clung round it, unless the blushes of the bright pink campion (*Lychnis sylvestris*) happen to o'ershadow it. Here also, as in the rough highways, the enchanted herb of our forefathers, the sacred one of the old Greeks and Romans (*Verbena officinalis*), lifts up its slender, solitary spikes, reminiscent of many mysteries. How curious its history from those remote ages, when Superstition "digged it in the dark," first drawing with a sword a circle round it, and pouring forth libations to the Earth, to that

* Gerard found this plant in a corn-field at Greenhithe. We have never seen it growing wild in England, but gathered it in a stubble-field at the back of the Bois de Nuilly, near Picquigny, in Picardy. Lindley has blotted it from his "Synopsis of the British Flora."

in which its frequent use and presence everywhere (for it is constantly found near villages and dwellings) procured it the name of "Simplers' joy." As in the Druidic days, the priests of Jupiter in ancient Rome wore garlands of it, while chaplets of it adorned the altars; and only with its branches might the ashes of sacrifice be swept away. Dedicated to Beauty by the Greeks, Venus the Victorious wore a crown of it mingled with myrtle—the distant type, perhaps, of a custom still lingering in some of the German valleys, of presenting brides with a vervain hat.

But we must take farewell of a subject that has for us enchantments of its own, leading us on from season to season, from plant to plant, forgetful that our love of them for their use sake is so solitary, and that the days are past when high-born ladies, like the young Iapis,—

> "Preferred the power of plants, and secret praise
> Of healing art, beyond Phœbean bays."

LA RENONCULE EN L'ŒILLET.

FABLE.

PAR LE CHEVALIER DE CHATELAIN.

La renoncule, un jour, dans un bouquet,
Près de l'œillet se trouva réunie,
Le lendemain elle eut le parfum de l'œillet.

On ne peut que gagner en bonne compagnie.

THE "FAREWELL SUMMER" FLOWER.

BY MRS. HENRY THOMPSON.

Was it even the dreaming fever
  Of one who lay dying young
Who gave thee thy name for ever?
  Who bade thee with solemn tongue,
While earth remaineth, thus utter thy moan,
Telling to all men the summer is gone?

How deeply thy perishing beauty
  Had touched him, no words may tell,
Ere he made it thy ceaseless duty
  To whisper his last farewell;
Ere the yearning grief of his mortal hour
He hung on thy blossoms, unconscious flower.

Yet to die, while the sun-light glistened
  So warm on the yellow leaf,
While the loving angels listened
  To quiet his parting grief,
And lead him, by waters so still and sweet,
Over tender grass to his Saviour's feet;

Ere the summer, indeed, had perished
From out of his youthful heart,
Ere the happiness deepest cherished,
As a dream, he had seen depart,
He need not mourn as he bowed him to die,
There are darker sorrows beneath the sky.

The deep torture of wounded feeling,
Sore trials we yet must bear,
To the desolate chamber stealing,
And none to speak comfort there;
For the gentlest voice may grow strangely cold,
And love be even a tale that is told.

Yet, pilgrim, faint not in thy duty,
Though none may be near to say,
"I will circle thee round with beauty,
Thou shalt feel not the weary way;
My love shall make even the desert flower
As a blossoming rose in summer hour."

Heed not the cold silence around thee,
Thine angel shall cheer thee on,
With glimpses of heaven surround thee,
And bless thee, though all be gone,
Till the hour when thy Saviour himself shall stay
Thine idle tears—till His voice shall say,
"Sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Rectory, Wrington, October 1852.

ON THE

PORTRAIT OF THE HON. MRS. ASHLEY.

BY A SEPTAGENARIAN.

Cold are the hands so many a year that flung
  Blooming life-roses on December snow;
Cold are the lips from which did pleasant song
  And gracious legend musically flow.
Yet Winter claims its cheering flowers anew,
  Its fireside tales, its rebecks in the hall;
  Nor must Queen Beauty lack her madrigal,
Because the strings upon the lute are few.
  The old tunes are the best,—the dance most light
To the old measures on the floor goes round;
  Therefore, O Princess of this Christmas night,
Be with the old familiar garland crowned.
  Since grace is with thee wheresoe'er thou rovest,
  May every perfect bliss attend thee where thou lovest.

THE GOLD-DIGGER.

BY ELIZA JULIA SPARROW.

"What mortal his own doom may guess ?
Let none despond, let none despair."—BYRON.

IT was a summer night; the air was soft, and a gentle breeze played amidst the luxuriant foliage of stately trees and spice-like plants, but no perfume came upon its breath. A rich park-like country was to be seen in the bright moonlight, stretching far away to the right; whilst on the opposite side a hill rose abruptly, its uneven outline clearly defined against the pale blue sky. At the foot of this hill lay a camp. A green valley, skirted on either side by a wood, and through which a river wandered, spread some leagues northward, and then opened into a wider space, and wound round the base of a mountain, on the sloping sides of which some hundred tents were pitched. Notwithstanding the warlike appearance of two camps, lying within only a few leagues of each other, no evening gun had been heard. Night had closed in without the sound of drum or trumpet, and the quiet stars were the only watchers.

Could they be hostile armies, awaiting but the morning sun to begin a deadly strife? Nay, reader, they were the gold-diggers at Ballarat and Mount Alexander, in the far-off land of Australia.

The morning rose on a busy scene; several hundreds turned out of their frail tenements, and, forming themselves into small parties, ascended the hill-side, and worked in groups. The work was of a most laborious description, the ground being hard, and in some places the precious metal lay many feet beneath the surface. Fires were quickly lighted, and breakfast cooked and dispatched, and again all hands turned out; those who were unable to dig, picked up and washed the golden grains belonging to their party. The greatest harmony and brotherhood prevailed. On the previous evening a purchaser of gold had arrived, and after wandering amongst the assembled numbers, seeking a "familiar face" from whom he might beg a night's accommodation, he at length found an old acquaintance, who assisted him to turn his good steed into the open country, and offered him as much of the ground of his tent as he could lie upon, which was thankfully accepted. Such is life in the golden countries; men with their pockets full of money, and the cry of gold on every lip, want the simple accommodation that the poorest in our own land are seldom without possessing.

The gold-buyer was not the least busy of the multitude, though differently engaged. He proceeded at once to erect a tent for himself; and cutting down a tree, the stump of which he left high enough to form a seat, he threw up the branches all round it, and covered it over with a tarpaulin, bestowed on him by his friend for the purpose. After two days' labour he was to be seen seated in his new habitation, with a rude table or bench before him, on which rested a pair of scales and a coarse leather pouch.

The diggers immediately crowded to him, eager to change their treasure into ready-made money. There was the weather-beaten seaman, who had braved a hundred storms in search of maintenance, carrying in a poor cotton handkerchief a store of wealth sufficient to make him comfortable for the remainder of his

life, the precious atoms of which seemed likely to drop through so frail a keeping. On he came, beside the learned lawyer and the gay captain, all clad in the same loose woollen dress, and covered with mud from head to foot. Some conveyed the golden grains in wooden bowls, dripping from the waters of the Leigh; whilst others were to be seen with tin vessels of every shape. Each portion was weighed and sold, and the seller departed rejoicing. Many, who had not been as fortunate as they expected, had departed to join the tents on Mount Alexander; but the work was of such an interesting character, that no arrival or departure caused a moment's pause, except that of the Government van. Was it that it bore away the fruits of their toil? or that the gold they had gained was to be shipped from Melbourne to Old England, the native land of many there? However it was, the sight of the vehicle laden with bags, rattling away over the uneven road, with its door securely locked and the key delivered to the policeman, who took his seat beside the driver, and with its two mounted police in advance, one on either side, and its native guard in the rear, *did* cause a degree of excitement; then a pause, as it was watched till it wound away out of sight.

The 6th of January was the warmest day of the whole summer; the hot winds, peculiar to the country, had been blowing fiercely from the north during the forenoon. Evening had at length drawn a veil over the burning sun, and produced a degree of refreshing coolness. The gold-buyer sat languidly in his tent, as it was entered by a tall figure; and on looking up, he was saluted by a young man with an air of natural dignity. There was something that at once attracted and pleased him in his appearance. He had removed his slouched hat on entering, which displayed a quantity of chestnut hair, falling in glossy masses over a high and sunburned brow; his eyes were dark hazel, with a melancholy expression; the nose was aquiline, and the mouth and chin peculiarly well formed.

Yet it was not the regularity of the features that attracted the gold-buyer, it was the manly bearing, the easy grace of the true-born gentleman. He advanced to the bench, and dropped some grains of gold from his naked hand into the scales.

"What!" exclaimed the gold-buyer, "you, the youngest and strongest that has yet entered my hut, is this the fruit of your long day's labour?"

"Alas, it is even so!" answered the young man, in a deep low voice. "That amongst four is nothing. I am not one of Fortune's favourites, I fear."

"Say not so," said the gold-buyer, unconsciously interested. "Your life is only in its morning; this," pointing to the gold, "is but your beginning."

"It is true it is only my beginning here," replied his companion; "but for seven long years I have toiled in this country, and whilst others have made ample fortunes, I—I have failed in everything!"

"It is *here*, then, that your fortune will be made," said the gold-buyer, encouragingly. "Never despair in the midst of plenty; those who begin well, gain all they are to have at once; and those who commence poorly, become enriched in the end."

"Ha!" said the young man, with a faint smile; "your words would encourage me to hope."

"Your native land is Ireland, I would presume?" said the gold-buyer.

"Yes," answered his companion, quickly. "And yours?"

"The same," said the gold-buyer. "We are countrymen." And stretching out his hand it was warmly grasped in silence, with the lively emotions that no pen can describe and few can understand, except those who have experienced on a distant land the thrilling sensations of such a meeting when strangers become friends, for the simple reason that they bear with them the sweet

associations of home and friends. "Now I would ask your name?" said the gold-buyer, smiling.

"It is Reginald Ven," answered his companion. "I was born in county of ——, my father is a ——"

"A clergyman," interrupted the gold-buyer. "I know your father; I saw him only a few weeks before I left Ireland. All were well. I hope to see him again shortly, for I don't intend remaining long here. The heavy rain causes so much damp and chill in those comfortless abodes, that bad effects must follow; and then this heat," passing his hand over his face, "unless I was making an enormous fortune, I would not stand it."

"Just in this place," said Reginald, "everything is disagreeable and uncomfortable; but those residing in houses find the climate and country delightful. But you said you had seen my father. How does he appear in health? He sent a letter by you, perhaps; I got one from home, posted at Melbourne, about a month since."

"Your father looks remarkably well. I have not known him for more than a couple of years; so I can say nothing of any alteration that, perhaps, you might observe. He, amongst many others, gave me letters: his was for you. It is strange enough that you and I should meet."

Reginald made no answer, but he looked wistfully at the gold-buyer, as if he fain would make some further inquiries; at last he said,—

"Were you stopping in the neighbourhood of Glenallen, when you saw my father?"

"Yes," replied the gold-buyer, earnestly. "I was there for some time on business. I know all the people about there; and a very kind, hospitable people they are. A great number of them were preparing at the time to set out for this country."

Reginald paused; a change came over his face; his lips

unclosed, as if about to speak, when the tent was entered by three or four diggers. He took the price of his gold from the bench, and was about to depart, when the gold-buyer said,—

"I'll see you again, I hope?"

"Yes," answered Reginald, and disappeared.

The next day was Sunday. There was no stir in the camp till a late hour. A clergyman arrived about one o'clock, and read divine service in the open air. Branches had been arranged to form a sort of platform, so as to raise him above his numerous audience. It was an interesting sight to see so many hundred beings, whose uncovered heads were only here and there sheltered by the shadow of a tree from the rays of the scorching sun, worshipping the Almighty on a spot which, one year before, the foot of man had seldom pressed. A hymn rose upon the quiet air, in which many a wild and untutored voice mingled with the mellow notes of the well-taught singer. One full tenor might be distinguished from the rest: it was the deep voice of Reginald Ven; and the feeling with which the words were uttered told that they were no empty sounds, and that deep devotion dwelt within his soul.

After the clergyman had departed, some were spending the remainder of the day in reading, and others lounging in groups under shelter of a tent. All at once there was a general stir, produced by the return of the Government van from Melbourne. The Sabbath being thus profaned by the running of a public vehicle was the only objectionable arrangement at Ballarat Diggings. However, to their honour be it told, many had raised their voices against it, and that was the last Sunday it was to travel. It did arrive, however, on that day, at about four o'clock, and a crowd instantly gathered round it, with the usual question,—

"What news?"

"None, except new arrivals," answered the driver, as he descended from his seat; and resting one foot on the step of his

rude vehicle, while the other reached the ground, he cracked his whip, and proclaimed, with the self-important air of his class, "Dutch, American, and English vessels are come; some to Port Phillip, some to Geelong." All listened in breathless silence as he continued, "The finest ship that ever crossed the sea is lying at anchor off Port Phillip at this moment. Never saw her match!—never saw such a build!"

"Where from?" asked an old tar, who stood close beside him.

"England—she is English—a noble vessel! The 'Fairy Queen.'"

"What did she bring—emigrants?" asked the sailor.

"Ay, by the hundreds. Some settlers, as I am told; and I suppose we'll have a new rush of diggers up here."

By this time his horses were unharnessed, and, assisted by willing hands, they were led beyond the tents, where they could get plenty of sweet fresh grass. Reginald had listened with interest from the door of his tent to what had passed; and closing the book he had been reading, he sauntered out into the solitude of the neighbouring wood. After having gone some distance, and supposing himself entirely alone, he started on being tapped on the shoulder by one of the native police.

"You won't tell?" said the man, putting his swarthy face close to Reginald's ear.

"Tell what?" demanded Reginald, quickly; and on looking sharply at the intruder he recognised him, and said, "Ha, Nouka, is that you?"

"Yes, it is me—your old servant. Your friend in Melbourne gave me that," showing a small packet; "he asked me to make you out and give it to you. But you won't tell? as they say there is a penalty for bringing anything."

"Thank you, thank you!" returned Reginald, taking the letter. "You need not fear: you may trust me."

The man disappeared, and Reginald leaned against a tree and opened it. It evidently contained more interesting intelligence than he expected; for on reading the first few lines a momentary joy lighted up his countenance, which was followed by an expression of the deepest anguish. A deadly paleness overspread his face; and as he held the open letter in one hand, he pressed the other upon his forehead and eyes, as if he would shut out the world.

For some minutes he remained silent; at length he muttered to himself,—

"Who could have thought it seven years ago? Such a dream! Alas, alas! and I as poor as the day I landed! Treasure everywhere!—gold, gold! One priceless treasure!—but not for me—not for me!" After a pause he bent his head downward, and letting fall the letter, he covered his face with both his hands, and said in a low voice, "Oh God, forgive me, I am a murmurer! How dare I dictate!—Thy will ——"

The remainder of the sentence was lost, his hands fell from his face, and his upraised look indicated that he was seeking strength from on high to subdue the present tumult of his feelings. After some moments he took up the letter, and read it over with more calmness; then drawing a small portrait from his bosom, he gazed at it with a look of deep affection, kissed it fervently, and replaced it, saying,—

"My all on earth!"

He walked slowly towards his temporary home, which he did not reach until the darkness of night made visible the employments of the diggers round their bright fires, as the evening meal was being cooked, and presented a picturesque view of the encampment. Reginald threw himself upon his rude couch without tasting anything.

Sunrise found him in consultation with his party on the hill: they stood round the cavity at which they had been working

since their arrival at the diggings with so little success. Each carefully, and, probably, for the hundredth time, examined the gravelly substance, and at last resolved with one consent to begin at another place, and fixing on a spot nearer Golden Point they commenced their heavy task. Reginald had passed a night of feverish restlessness, the effects of which were visible in his looks and spirits; but yet there was an energy in all his movements that, perhaps, even he himself was not aware of, nor from whence it sprung. Another party took possession of the spot that Reginald and his companions had abandoned; and in about a week came on the finest gold, and in the greatest quantity, that had yet been discovered. The "cradle," rocked by means of a crank that had been invented for washing gold, was put into requisition by them, and they shortly realised some thousands of pounds.

The gold-buyer was preparing for his departure on the following day when Reginald entered his tent. He greeted him with much cordiality, and expressed regret that he had not seen him for so long a time; and observing a great alteration in Reginald's appearance he said,—

"I fear you are ill. This hard life does not suit you."

"I am not ill," answered Reginald, "but I am sadly disappointed. My party, only a week since, abandoned the spot that has turned out so abundant, and here," laying down a tin vessel which contained some grains, "this is the result of all our labour."

The gold-buyer was silent, but his frank and open countenance betrayed his kindly feeling, and the concern he felt at the young man's failure.

"That was unfortunate," he at length said. "You must persevere where you are now working, and I hope to hear a good result."

"You are going?" observed Reginald.

"Yes, to-morrow," answered the gold-buyer. "I mean to stop for a time in Melbourne. I think of joining Nesbitt and Company in gold-buying."

"Nesbitt is my oldest friend and correspondent. We came to this country together," returned Reginald.

"I shall hear of you, then," said the gold-buyer, shaking him cordially by the hand. "Keep up your spirits; you don't know how soon you may be coming to us, carrying with you a handsome fortune. This is the last I shall buy here," weighing the grains Reginald had brought. "It is more than you had last time. Good-bye, good-bye! Now to search for my horse;" and quitting the tent, he hastened into the open country.

Reginald was greatly depressed; his weary looks told of mental suffering. He did not grudge the success that had attended the new party at his old quarters; that was not in his nature, nor would his principles have allowed him to indulge it. Nevertheless, it was a trial. His hopes in life depended on his making an independence; and after so many years of toil and disappointment, where is the human heart that such an incident would not depress? He, however, clung to the hope that the field of gold would yet yield its fruit to him, and worked on.

Reginald's early life had been spent in the bosom of his father's home, amidst a numerous band of brothers and sisters. The small living of Glenallen was situated in a pleasant locality, surrounded by many families, who mingled together in social intercourse. Amongst them were Mr. and Mrs. Neville, who occupied a beautiful cottage on the borders of the Rectory grounds. They were Mr. Ven's most intimate and chosen friends; and their family, consisting of a daughter and three sons, were the constant companions of his own.

Their days of sunny childhood had been spent together, and year after year had stolen unconsciously away, until Reginald had attained to a sufficient age to enter upon the studies which

were to fit him for a learned profession, the expenses of which were to have been borne by his uncle, with whom he was a favourite, and who was himself one of the brightest ornaments of the Irish bar. Kate Neville was a beautiful girl, just blooming into womanhood; and it was without displeasure that both families had observed that the childish love which had existed between her and Reginald, instead of dying away as is sometimes the case, became stronger, and appeared to be of an enduring character. When either was absent from their homes for any time, they sought each other on their return with renewed affection.

New scenes and new acquaintances seemed but to have the effect of drawing them closer to each other, as if the charm they found in each other's society was more sweetly felt when contrasted with the world around them.

Thus unchecked, their attachment had grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength; and Mr. Neville, after some deliberation, consented to bestow on Reginald the fair hand of his daughter as soon as he was established in the world, and able to make an independence for himself. Thus happily and serenely did the golden hours of early life move on; when one bright May morning the post brought a letter to Mr. Ven sealed with black. It bore the intelligence of the sudden death of his eldest brother, and at once blighted the fair prospects of Reginald. He died intestate, and, consequently, his fortune fell to the next brother, Mr. Ven's senior by many years. It was the first storm that had crossed Reginald's path, and it swept over his young spirit with a blighting influence. His first thought was of Kate. Would Mr. Neville withdraw his consent to their engagement, now that his career in life had become uncertain? After having said a few words of consolation to his father, he repaired to the cottage.

Kate saw nothing frightful in the loss he had sustained.

Hope was young in her bosom, and her true woman's nature never appeared so rich in its own loveliness as when she soothed his depressed spirits, and talked in dreamy hopefulness of happiness and independence that would yet be theirs. On his way homeward he met Mr. Neville, and at once made him acquainted with the disappointment he had met with, and expressed a hope that it would not alter the relations in which they stood to each other.

Mr. Neville was a kind man, but he was, nevertheless, cold and determined. His early life had been a military one; and his contact with society served, perhaps, in some degree to harden his disposition, and to render him callous to the finer feelings of the heart. Once he formed a resolution, no one need gainsay it; and his reply to Reginald was characteristic. "Not in my friendship, Reginald; there will be no alteration as long as you are deserving of it as you have hitherto been. But with regard to Kate, I hate long engagements, and correspondence, and so forth; but as I said before, when you make an independence—if you are both of the same mind—I will not refuse my cordial consent. As matters have turned out, I think so close an intercourse is not advisable."

Reginald heard; and his words fell like iron upon his soul. He strove to speak, but the words died away unuttered. To be near Kate, and to be prohibited the freedom of intercourse he had hitherto enjoyed! The thought was not to be endured; and he quickly came to a determination — it was that of emigrating.

A lovely evening in early summer found Reginald on his accustomed path to the cottage. He was a changed man! Years seemed to have passed over him since his footsteps last pressed it! His face had lost its happy expression; his eyes were hollow; and his step languid, though hurried. Kate

was busy arranging some creeping roses in the trellis-work which fronted the cottage. The sun was just setting, and his parting beams enveloped her graceful figure in golden light; her large liquid eyes were raised as she matted the flowers. Reginald approached unperceived. The colour heightened on her cheek as she received him with her accustomed smile, but the bloom quickly died away as she observed the sadness of his countenance. Reginald perceived that Mr. Neville had not acquainted his daughter with the conversation he had held with him; and drawing her arm within his he led her away through the sweet scenes of their childhood, and soon she became a sharer in his keen and bitter agony.

They parted. Oh, the anguish contained in that brief sentence—they parted! No tie bound them to each other but the bond of their affections, the strength of which time was yet to prove.

Reginald was far out upon the waters ere Kate had arisen from a bed of sickness. The shock she had received on learning her father's determination; then the parting—perhaps for ever—were too much. Her hitherto untried feelings had been called forth in all their strength, and overcame her. A fever ensued: she recovered, but arose from her couch, how changed! The merry-hearted girl had become a full-grown woman, staid and sombre, as one from whom the gladness of youth had vanished for ever. Years passed, as years pass to those who miss from their side "the one that cheered and blessed" their earlier days. Mr. Neville was offered an appointment on the Swan River, which he would gladly have accepted for the advancement of his sons but for the declining state of his wife's health, which shortly after terminated in her death. It was a bereavement that the whole household deeply deplored, but was most keenly felt by Kate. The faithful repositor of all her feelings, the changeless companion of her sorrows, and

the partaker of her every joy, was gone; and left her without that "holy place of rest," to which she had been accustomed to turn on all occasions. Nearly seven years had sped their way to eternity, and Mr. Neville was again offered a government situation in Australia: this time it was at Melbourne. It was at once accepted of, and the journey determined on. If there was a gleam of joy on earth for Kate, it was in the prospect of going to Australia. No tidings of Reginald had ever reached her save through her attached young friends, his brothers and sisters, who, conscious of the uncertainty of Reginald's career, mentioned it to each other as seldom as possible.

All was bustle and excitement in Plymouth as the "Fairy Queen" received her freight and passengers. At length she weighed anchor, and away she flew over the dancing waters, with a cheer, and a hearty "God speed," from those on shore. Amongst the passengers were Mr. Neville and his family. A deep depression rested upon Kate and her brothers. The farewells of their young friends, the household hearth deserted, and the sinking into misty distance of their own dear native land, were all as yet too sadly recollected. Frequently did their thoughts linger on their mother's grave, as in its depth of loneliness it lay, in the land they were leaving for ever. So warmly and truly does the Irish heart cling to its early home; yea, even to the ashes of the dead.

Mr. Neville found some old military acquaintances amongst his fellow-travellers, and soon forgot the present in recurrences to the past. It was not, however, till strange sights and unknown ships appeared upon the vast ocean they were crossing that cheerfulness returned to his children.

After nearly four months spent upon the world of waters, their future home appeared upon the horizon. What thrilling sensations arose in the bosoms of all as the cry of "Land!"

was heard. Hope shed a golden light before them as the gallant ship cut her way through a summer sea;—she neared, gained the port, and cast anchor.

As soon as landing was accomplished Mr. Neville was waited upon by a government officer, and matters were speedily arranged, which secured him an appointment that was to bring him a handsome income. He took a beautiful verandah cottage, at Kate's earnest request, about a quarter of a mile from Melbourne; and it was her peculiar care to fit it up as much in resemblance of their former home as possible. A neat garden was to be seen in front, where flowers bloomed in rich and varied dyes, but held no perfume in their dewy cells. Bright birds sported and chattered among the branches of the trees, but no song was heard. Often was the fragrance of the primrose and honeysuckle of her own land remembered with regret; and the sweet tiny voices of Ireland's wild birds came back upon her memory with a tearful sadness: but her present home was a land of hope for her. Might she not meet Reginald again? and be his fortune ever so adverse, might they not be *friends*, as they were long ago? Thus she hoped, till "hope deferred made the heart sick."

One evening, towards the close of summer, Mr. Neville sat alone in the tasteful little drawing-room of his cottage. He had left his office earlier than usual that day for the purpose of visiting his sons, who held various situations in the district, and had returned home somewhat later than was his custom. Having just left the dining-room, he seated himself opposite to a cheerful fire and took up a book, which he read with apparent interest. He was, however, soon disturbed by a knocking at the door and a servant ushering into his presence a gentleman, whom he did not recollect to have seen before. The stranger, who appeared agitated, advanced towards him with an outstretched hand, saying,—

"Mr. Neville, do you not know me?"

Mr. Neville approached him, and cautiously taking his hand looked earnestly into his face, saying,—"You remind me of some one whom I have seen. You must excuse me, at this moment I cannot recollect. Can it be ——?" as a sudden thought seemed to cross his mind. "Can it be Reginald ——?"

"Yes; I am Reginald Ven. Is it possible I am so much changed?"

"My dear Reginald," exclaimed Mr. Neville, with unusual warmth, "a thousand pardons: I am rejoiced to see you."

"Your family, Mr. Neville?" interrupted Reginald, with increased agitation. "Is Kate—is your daughter here?"

"Ah, my poor Kate!" said Mr. Neville.

"What!" exclaimed Reginald, his lips becoming as white as ashes, "is she not here?—did you not bring her?"

"Yes, my dear boy," answered Mr. Neville, "I did bring my beloved Kate—she is the comfort of my life; but I was going to say to you that you will see a great alteration in her. Since her poor mother's death she has not been strong, nor indeed some time before it. You shall see her, Reginald. I must not delay the meeting of old friends."

The good-natured but hardened man of the world, forgetting how much cause there had been for the alteration in his fair child, never dreamed that anything more than "old friendship" could exist between the lovers of seven years ago. He touched a small bell, and a lady entered the room; she was dressed in deep mourning, and her face was pale and sad. Reginald sprang to his feet. A flush of joy passed over her face as they instantly recognised each other.

"Reginald!"

"Kate!"

These were the only words that were uttered. One fond embrace,—their eyes met, and in that one glance heart spoke

to heart that time and distance found them both unchanged.

After some moments Reginald drew her to a couch and sat down beside her, and throwing his arm around her he said,—

"Kate, we have met at last, I trust never to part again!" He received no answer. She tried to speak she knew not what, and her overjoyed feelings gave vent in tears. Mr. Neville had left the room, much moved by a meeting which he had so little contemplated; when he returned, Reginald addressed him with a smiling and happy face.

"Mr. Neville, I am at last a rich man. Do you remember your promise to me when I should become independent?"

"I do, Reginald, I do;" and Mr. Neville warmly pressed his hand. "And I am prepared to fulfil it, as I see there is more strength in your affections than I dreamed of."

"Thank you, thank you," returned Reginald, still holding Kate's hand within his own. "I am doubly rich—I have all I desire on earth. When I heard from my friend Nesbitt, in Melbourne, of your arrival, I cannot express the painful tumult of my feelings—the idea of not coming to see you after so many years' absence was dreadful; but I was as poor as the day I landed. I was at Ballarat, and had met with many disappointments. My party, shortly after, found the richest vein of gold yet discovered; and it has made me the rich and happy man I am to-night. I had but one comfort through all," continued he in a low voice; and turning to Kate, "It was this,"—showing her the small portrait of herself which he wore. It brought back the recollection of the time it was painted, and of her mother, who, with a mother's pride, had placed upon her neck and hair the bands of pearls to deck her for the occasion.

The doors of one of the handsomest churches in Melbourne were thrown open one morning at an early hour, and a bridal party stood before the altar. There was nothing unusual to

be seen, except the remarkable beauty of the newly-married pair. They received the warm congratulations of the group of persons that surrounded them, amongst whom we recognised the gold-buyer, who laughed heartily and rubbed his hands, declaring that, after all, Reginald Ven was the luckiest man that ever had been at the gold mines.

WHEN THOU ART HAPPY.

BY A. E. PONSONBY.

When thou art happy, and hast half forgotten
Him who so fondly loved, but loved in vain,
Say, shall no dream, by twilight's hour begotten,
Rise in thy gentle breast, and float across thy brain?

When the faint stars dawn in the purple heaven,
And day dies slowly on the distant shore,
Wilt thou remember how, full many an even,
We saw this trysting bower *I* now may seek no more?

When those dear eyes, now filled with tears of sadness,
Bend to some happier lover's burning gaze,
One thought may cloud their bright, triumphant gladness,
One mournful shade may pass—the ghost of other days.

When at thy feet, all passionately pouring
His soul's best wealth in one beseeching strain,
He kneels, oh! think of me, who, so adoring,
So breathed my soul for thee—so loved—but loved in vain!

STANCES IMPROVISÉES À UN ENFANT.*

PAR AL. DE LAMARTINE, 1853.

Quand tu te souviendras de ta charmante hégyre,
Où posé pour un soir au bord de mon ruisseau
Deux mères, t'adoraient de leur pieux sourire,
Deux anges à genoux te servaient au berceau ;

Quand tu te souviendras de la langue inconnue
Que la maison parlait, ruche d'un autre essaim,
Des brises qui marbraient ta belle épaule nue,
Des lys moins blancs que toi, qu'on jettait dans ton sein ;

Quand tu te souviendras de ces genoux de femme
Ou l'on se disputait le soin de t'assoupir,
Ou tout un cher foyer dont tu paraissais l'ame
De peur de t'éveiller retenait son soupir ;

Quand tu te souviendras des belles grappes mûres
Qui sous la vigne jaune arrondie en berceau,
Faisait lever tes mains, avec de doux murmures
De ne pouvoir atteindre ou béquetait l'oiseau ;

* Henri Lyte partant de Monceau pour les Alpes, 28 Nov. 1832.

De tes jeux sur la source avec les coquillages
Des feuilles qui pleuvaient du saule murmurant,
Et des barques de noix qu'a de riants naufrages
Commes des rêves d'homme entraînait le courant ;

Quand tu commenceras à la trouver amère
Cette coupe de Dieu qui n'est douce qu'au bord,
Et que tu suivras seul sans la main de ta mère
La route où chaque pas trébuche sur la mort ;

Souviens toi de l'année, et du mois, et de l'heure,
Et dis en revoyant en songe ce séjour ;
" Que la paix d'un long soir soit sur cette demeure
Où j'apportai la joie, où j'emportai l'amour !"

FRIENDSHIPS.

BY ADA TREVANION.

Like summer-blooms which fade away
Are passing friendships, light and gay;
The shining beams and falling showers
Now animate, now mar the flowers;
Thus Chance, which bids such friendships rise,
To them duration still denies,
And blindly breaks the fleeting chain,
Too fragile to be joined again.

But hearts which are sincerely bound
By Friendship's tender bands around,
Dwells there a power *their* love to change
In all Time brings of dark or strange?
Ah, no! like buds on one stem born,
Which share the sunshine and the thorn;
Together linked for good or ill,
They beat in sweet communion still.

True Friendship's wreath is of those flowers
Which brave the blast of wintry hours;
Which charm when joys have passed away,
And hopes have proved as false as they;
Yea, shed their richest, best perfume,
'Mid scenes of woe and days of gloom;
And, meekly steadfast, blossom on,
When all on earth beside is gone.

Ramsgate, March 31*st*, 1853.

LETTY BLOOMFIELD.

BY MRS. WARD.

Sunset in the Vale of Evesham!

A glow was on the valley, save where the purple shadows of the hills, which divided Worcestershire from Herefordshire, veiled the smiling corn-fields from the light that tipped the mountain-tops with gold; the lofty woods were rich in foliage, the brimming Severn shone as bright as steel between the park-like meadows and the orchards garlanded with fruit, for it was mid-autumn; and the burnished windows of the manifold farm-houses scattered over the landscape winked again in the warm glances cast on them by the sun, as he seemed to whisper a fare-well on the soft night air; while his lady rival, the harvest-moon, came sailing up the river, touching with her silver wand many a nook which had been cast into shade by the bolder glories of its neighbours, the sparkling brook, the broad-faced mansion, the tall church-tower, or the outlines — some solemn, some grotesque — that marked the hill-boundary of the country.

We had made a party of people of all ages to spend a day in harvest-time, at one of the prettiest *amateur* farms in Worcestershire. I was but a school-girl at the time, and knew nothing of country life beyond the regulated drive, the stroll in the park or shrubbery, the grave dinner-party,—the routine, in fact, of mere county society, the dullest condition to which mortal can

be condemned on earth, and this day had long been anticipated as one of real enjoyment.

Daylight began to fade, and we had not as yet been disappointed. We had found a nut-glade by the river side; five or six of us had possessed ourselves of an old boat, with three oars, and had glided down the Severn at the imminent risk of our lives, singing as we went, and baling out the crazy bark with a porcelain cup abstracted from the pic-nic basket; we had made the arches of those pretty bridges that span the stream in that part of the valley ring again with our glee, and we girls had come back with torn frocks, faded ribbons, veils like wisps of damp hay, and wet shoes and gloveless hands. In a word, no one could scold us into common sense over the syllabub which we were taking on the lawn, apart from the elder groups, till an incident occurred which sobered us at once, and sent us home with grave faces and sorrowful emotions; for, though we were young and giddy, and somewhat untractable, we were tender-hearted, and in our short lives had not had time to learn aught but peace and goodwill towards our fellow-beings.

One of our party was my cousin, Almeric Gresley, of the Inniskilling Dragoons. He was charmed with the freshness and *abandon*, as he termed it, of this rural *fête*.

"What a lucky fellow he was, to be supping syllabub and lounging on the soft turf in his morning costume, instead of being 'in harness at mess' in B—— barracks on such a heavenly evening! He could conceive nothing more beautiful than this smiling valley; save, perhaps, the painted skies of the tropics, or visions of the new earth promised to the blest!"

So talked Cousin Almeric, who was a great man among us; for, young as he was, he had *seen* the tropics of which he spoke; had been in India and fought the Sikhs, when he was on Sir H—— S——th's staff; had even been wounded, and had come

home to be petted for a while, having exchanged into the cavalry, sure of "home service for the next thirty years to come." So he talked, and we girls listened.

Below the lawn on which we sat stretched out the corn-fields in the mellow light. The reapers' song was over, children gleaners were wending their way homeward in groups, but many youths and maidens yet lingered among the golden sheaves after the fatigues of the day.

They were so merry that their mirth checked our own, and made us listen to the song and laughter that stirred the valley with music.

"Hush!" said Almeric, suddenly, as a party of glee-singers finished their chorus; "hush! I surely hear the sound of horses' feet!"

He started up, and in the stillness of the evening we distinguished the rattle of military accoutrements and the clang of armour. Sword, and spur, and carbine clashed along; and looking down the banks of the river, whence the sound proceeded, we distinctly saw the burnished helmets of a party of dragoons. They mounted a bank above the river, they galloped across a moonlit meadow, they forded the rushing brook that parted the lawn from the corn-fields, and clattered through the open gate among the startled reapers.

Down the slope, and across the brook, without his hat, sped Almeric; and after him sped my sister and I, with two or three young men of our party. Our best way lay over a narrow, fordable passage of the stream, and thence by a stile, over which Almeric had sprung, and standing there in some surprise, but not greatly moved by the incident which disturbed the peace of the valley, was the belle of the village, Letty Bloomfield.

She had seen soldiers in the great brick city of B——, and at the village fair at Whitsuntide, and she might have been caught by their brave attire and their flattering glances, if her

heart had not been proof against such gauds and glitter; for that was fixed on one with whom she had only a vague idea of marriage in the far perspective. Still she was one of those patient creatures whose nature may be resolute, although it may be "meek and lowly," and who, "long abiding," "still confiding," hope on and hope everything, where the lover of their choice is strong of purpose and of superior intelligence.

But Letty is standing at the stile, and so are we, and before the sergeant commanding the party of dragoons has caught sight of Almeric, he—the sergeant—has ridden up to a group of reapers, and terror falls upon the villagers, as the deserter, of whom the soldiers are in quest, comes forward and gives himself up; and the name of Henry Ashley passes from lip to lip; and Ashley himself goes by a prisoner, and casts just one look upon the poor gleaner girl, who lets fall her burden with a woeful cry of sorrow, and lies there pale and not quite insensible, for she shivers from the terror that has fallen on her, and, though overcome, is quite awake to the reality of her misery.

The dragoons clattered up the village street, bearing their prisoner with them, past his mother's house. The widow looked out in wonder as "the noise drew nigh." She could distinguish nothing but a crowd of soldiers in bright armour, sword and helm glittered in the radiance of the night on the summit of the hill above the village. We heard the tramp of horses' feet passing down the other side of the steep for a few minutes, and soon the valley was left in hushed and sorrowful surprise.

Almeric came to us at the stile, where some of the servants were lifting poor Letty. The eyes were closed upon the white face, the handkerchief had fallen from the pretty head, the rustic dress was in disorder, and the long tresses, all unbound, hung down over the fair arms,—so different to the sunburnt hands of the poor little gleaner.

"Here is the old story," said Almeric, as he helped to raise

Letty; "these dragoons belong to my regiment, and I suppose we shall be having this unfortunate girl following the lover to the barracks. Well, it makes one's heart ache to look at her, and see what she will come to one of these days! Some of the people tell me the lad's mother lives here, and that she is a widow, and is very respectable—I must find out all about it."

Now Cousin Almeric was just the man to sift out the truth of any affair in which he took an interest, and so here is the outline of the tale he gathered on the spot before he slept that night.

He and I were to have met next morning to see the sun rise on the valley. I lifted my curtain just as day dawned, and looked towards the hill-top, eastward of the village; it was just touched with light, and I could see Almeric Gresley in the glow pressing up, and well on his way for B—— barracks.

He returned to *Crow's Nest*, our *amateur* farm, that night, weary and dispirited. He had been unsuccessful in his endeavours to obtain even a remission of the doom on the young deserter, who was imprisoned, and lay under sentence of court-martial.

It was reserved for Letty, our little gleaner, to achieve what Almeric had failed in.

But here is the outline of our young deserter's history, which Almeric gathered from the Rector of Edendale.

I have alluded to the lad's mother as a widow, and he was her only son.

Mrs. Ashley had been the belle of Edendale in the last generation, and had married — oh, woeful mistake!—out of her sphere. One shooting-season, some twenty years before the date of my sketch, there had come down to "the Hall," on a visit, a young lieutenant of the navy. He had only lately landed, after a voyage to the west coast of Africa. He caught sight of the fresh fair face one Sunday—introduced himself to

it in the prettiest of hazel copses—and, instead of carrying off the farmer's daughter as a legitimate prize, married her in the village church where her soft eyes and melodious voice had first charmed him; and by this proceeding utterly scandalised his relatives, who would have thought little of his ruining the innocent creature, and casting her off his hands as the usual sequel to such a chapter!

They passed one month together, and then a far-away cousin of Henry Ashley's father, who "had interest,"—got the young sailor ordered to South America, thinking the wife might follow; but poor Ashley died of fever at sea, and his boy was born an orphan. Mrs. Ashley got the clergyman at Edendale to write to her husband's relations; but they were too much shocked "at the connexion" he had made to have anything to say to it, and wrote a sharp letter in reply to the good Pastor.

In a word, my dear reader, as even *you* may not see the matter quite in the light that I do, perhaps, I had better not wound your susceptibility by entering into further details of what certain people termed "Henry Ashley's odious marriage;" so permit me to introduce Mrs. Ashley, as a widow of about nineteen years' standing, with an only son.

Broken in spirit, and almost penniless, she had returned to Edendale, to live and die in the valley, near the church in which she had been married. It would have been a consolation to her to have laid her dead husband under the "green flag" in the old churchyard; but he had been slung into the deep sea, poor fellow! and if it had not been for her boy, her heart would have broken, without more ado, at the very thoughts of that place of unrest in the wide Atlantic.

She had gone home to her father's farm, and been well cared for while he lived, good man!—for she was his only child, and motherless; but when he died little was left for her, and she hired a tiny cottage in Edendale, and took in needlework, and

had a few day-scholars, and, in short, struggled on as multitudes of such women do every day, only we know nothing about it, save when a picturesque incident occurs, such as I have described to you.

She was a placid, sweet-looking creature, though her beauty was faded; although she had been but the bride of a month, her heart had always been true to her sailor love, and sometimes —only sometimes—when her little scholars had a holiday, she would unpack a dilapidated-looking old box, which a kind messmate of her husband's had sent to Edendale, "on the chance of its finding the poor widow," and taking out a well-worn uniform, and sword, and a medal, would lay them before her, and "indulge" in a "good cry."

For it was at such moments she thought of what was to become of her boy. He was, like many other children of romance in real life, handsome, and high-spirited, and full of talent. Sketches of the country round, rough but clever, adorned her sitting-room; and at church, opposite to where she had sung and won her lost sailor, now sang the younger Harry.

But who is Letty?

Only a poor gleaner girl. She was but a few years since the daughter of a farmer, as Mrs. Ashley had been; but times were changed, and she, too, became an orphan, and it fell to her lot to glean in the very fields which had been her father's: not an uncommon occurrence in our day, I assure you.

I have neither time nor space to tell you much about Letty Bloomfield. Perhaps you will think she might have done better than glean. Patience! the old Pastor had promised her the post of village schoolmistress, but till it became vacant her means of living were very scanty, and, like a brave-hearted English girl as she was, she preferred gleaning to a life of dependence. She was free, too, to come and go as she listed; and she helped Mrs. Ashley in her school, and stitched by her

side far into the night; and, to do her justice, although her highest aspirations were fixed on Harry, she would have helped the widow and the friendless under any circumstances.

True, our poor Letty almost swooned away at the sight of Harry being carried off by the cruel soldiers, who had persuaded him to enlist in a moment of despair, when he had rushed over to B—— "to seek his fortune." Thence he had returned,— "deserted,"—to Edendale, only to look upon his mother's face once more, and then "don his bright armour" and depart to earn a commission and "be a gentleman, as his father had been." Poor Harry! he did not know that, to use the words of an old soldier, he might as well be ten *years* as ten *minutes* too late in military matters, and that while he stood apart from the reapers in the corn-field, wondering what would become of his mother and Letty till he came back again some day with a medal, perhaps, like his father's, the sergeant of dragoons and his "merry men" were on their way to disturb the peace of the valley.

True, as I have said, our Letty's heart failed her at the sight I have alluded to, but when Cousin Almeric rejoined his corps when his leave was "up," who should he see holding a parley at the barrack-gate, and blushing and trembling as she did so, but Letty Bloomfield, the belle of Edendale!

She had come to purchase Henry Ashley's discharge, and had twenty bright sovereigns in her palm; and the sergeant of the guard, touched by her earnestness, was sorely puzzled how to introduce the pretty country-girl within the gates "to speak to the commanding officer himself," when Captain Gresley settled the question, and within four-and-twenty hours made matters so clear with the Colonel, that the affair of Henry Ashley's discharge was placed in abeyance. Within a month he was at home, and within the year—how could it happen otherwise?—he and Letty were married!

Not long since my cousin Almeric and I met at the house of a mutual acquaintance in S—— Street. The people we were visiting were wealthy, and had lately risen much in the world.

I had not been in the drawing-room five minutes, before I discovered that Almeric's fancy, at least, was taken with the elder daughter Katherine. She did indeed look charming, as she stepped into the balcony among the fresh plants just placed there. Some grotesque rider in the street attracted her attention, and she laughed that bitter laugh of satire which some mistake for wit. Suddenly a shadow fell on her fair face, and came back into the room, as a knock at the door announced a visitor.

He was shown into the back drawing-room, and the servant brought in the card. She cast it from her into a basket.

"Tell him to come in," said she, sullenly.

And the visitor entered.

It was not from his air, but from Katherine's haughty attitude, that I felt sure the young man, thus strangely summoned, was poor or dependent. On a distant couch in the drawing-room reclined a pale girl, who had no beauty, save when she spoke, or smiled, or looked at Almeric; and then how the face lighted up! how the usually heavy eyes glittered! and what pearly teeth shone between the parted lips! This delicate-looking creature was Katherine's cousin, very "poor," and "stupid," and, in the world's eye, "plain." If ever one human being had sympathy with another, this pale girl had with Henry Ashley, for it was he who entered. She bowed to him, and light came into her face as she rose and advanced towards him.

Almeric Gresley and I withdrew into the balcony before Harry had time to recognise my cousin. We heard Ashley ask, with the air of one craving a favour, "if he might pay his respects to his aunt?"

"Mamma is engaged," said Katherine.

"I am sorry for it," said Harry; "but, perhaps, if you will send up my card, she may see *me*."

The pale cousin took upon herself to ring the bell; Katherine frowned, and when the servant came in desired him, in an ungracious tone, "to let his mistress know."

Meanwhile Ashley remained standing; Katherine threw herself into a chair in an attitude of the most insolent *abandon;* Mary, the pale cousin, looked woefully nervous; and soon, from our retreat, Almeric and I saw the servant return and *give back the card* to Ashley. Even the footman blushed at his errand: "his mistress was engaged," he said, "and begged that any communication intended for her might be *written*." Thereupon the colour mounted to Ashley's marble brow, and with a sweeping bow, and a look of mingled scorn and sorrow, he departed.

Almeric Gresley stepped before me into the room.

"Katherine Loftus," said he, abruptly, "who is that man?"

"Only a wretched, tiresome sort of a cousin of mine," said she, quite mistaking the motive which had dictated her lover's question. "He is a dreadful nuisance to mamma. I have never seen him before; but some stupid, injudicious people, want us to receive him, and we really cannot. We hear he is making a certain way for himself, but he *was* very wild and ——"

"He asked for his *aunt*," said Almeric: "*is* your mother his aunt?"

"Why, yes,—he is the son of a brother of hers, who chose to marry a mere village girl; and this youth has thought proper to do the same thing, and ——"

"You don't mean to say," said Almeric, again interrupting her, "that that man, who has been sent from this house just now, is your mother's brother's orphan son?"

Katherine laughed.

"O Katherine!" said Mary, in a low voice, and with a

look of extreme concern, "you should remember, too, that the girl whom he did marry took the whole of the money her father had left her out of the savings' bank, to purchase young Ashley's discharge when he was driven to enlist, because he would not be a burden to his poor mother."

"Nonsense!" said Katherine. "I don't believe a word of it."

"That is very easy to say, Katherine," continued the pale cousin, growing quite bold in her defence of the "poor relations:" "you know very well that it is quite true, and that Mr. Congreve, the clergyman, told us all about it,—how poor Letty battled against fortune, and cheered up the widow, and put by her little stock to buy a bit of land that had once been her father's; and how, when she had married young Ashley, she persevered till she made friends for him among the clever men in B——, and urged him forward, and—and——" Mary's face glowed with the excitement of good-will; "now he is a promising artist, and only wants a little pushing, a few introductions, to be one of the first men of the day; and I am sure, if I were you, I should be proud of my cousinship instead of ashamed."

Rat, tat, tat—Rat, tat!—Another visitor!

Most opportunely he came. It was old Mr. Congreve—bent with years—who had scarcely been in London since he left college; but now he was come, not merely to confirm the story just told by Mary, but to say he must find out Henry Ashley as soon as possible. Mrs. Ashley the elder had left Edendale some time before, and was living "somewhere" in London with her son and his wife, but where to find them at *once* was the thing, for the business he had come up about was important. Some shares in land, purchased long ago, in Australia, by old Bloomfield, and forgotten, or considered waste paper, had now turned up, and, owing to a discovery of gold, had proved of considerable value; and Mr. Congreve, as the rector of the parish, had been directed to trace out the heirs, &c.

&c. And the dear old man was so thoroughly bewildered with the idea of business amid the rush and roar, and vastness of London, that he sat down and wiped his face with a look of trouble, which was seldom seen on his serene brow.

The carriage which was to take Almeric and myself to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy came to the door at this instant.

"Come, dear Mr. Congreve," said Almeric Gresley, "you love pictures, do go with us to the Exhibition; you can sit there and amuse yourself, not only with the paintings, but the gay people thronging round them."

Mr. Congreve rebelled at once.

"Oh, but you must, Sir," said I; "some portraits of your old friends are in the Academy this year, and a beautiful bust of the Queen."

"I should like to see *that*," said the old man, rising; "but I must find out the Ashleys *to-day*, if possible."

"Well, Sir," said Almeric, "we will try what we can do. This evening I will call on W——, the portrait painter, and see how he can help us; meanwhile, we will talk about it as we go;" and Almeric fairly led off dear, gentle, old Mr. Congreve.

My cousin would have left the room without shaking hands with any one; but something in Mary's face drew him back, and he gave her a kind smile, on which she lived for a month.

* * * * *

Ascending the short, wide staircase of the Exhibition, we saw, right before us, the centre picture of the room,—a superb painting, which was evidently the grand attraction of the day. At a distance we could not distinguish the leading features of this exquisite production. We heard commentaries on it, on all sides:—"Quite a young artist!"—"Immense promise!"—"How did he get it in?" "Interest, I suppose?"—"Oh, no! Mr. L—— decided on its merits at once, and nearly quarrelled

with some of the hanging committee about this place for it." —"Indeed!" And the speakers advancing towards the painting, we followed.

None of us spoke. Mr. Congreve put on his spectacles.

"Surely, surely," said he at last, "it must be our valley! Gresley, where is the book?" and Almeric had searched the Catalogue, and found the name of both picture and artist: "and here they are, Sir," exclaimed my warm-hearted soldier-cousin; —"Read this, Sir,—'Sunset in the vale of Evesham.—Ashley.'"

Yes; there was "our valley," as Mr. Congreve fondly called it, glowing in beauty, with reapers in the foreground, and an aisle of trees, stretching away into the distance; and far away the outline of the beautiful hills, and the shining river winding through the lovely meadows. But Letty was not there.

No; but we found her,—at least her picture,—in another room, in her old homely costume, with golden sheaves upon her head, and the face wearing its first expression of simplicity and good sense, before sorrow and anxiety, and a deep feeling of responsibility, had changed it. Midway among the pictures of the Octagon Room was the "Portrait of the Artist's Wife," a mere sketch in chalks; but oh, so like! yet so different in its expression. Association with men of genius, and intelligence, and noble aspirations, had lighted up the little gleaner's face into that of a highly-contemplative woman; the change of dress, too, had wrought a marvellous alteration: nevertheless, the attire was simple, of dark silk relieved by delicate lace, and scattered through the profusion of sunny hair were a few corn-flowers.

We only had to look at the end of the Catalogue for the Ashleys' address, and deferring the sight of the Queen's bust for another day, drove to Newman Street at once.

* * * * *

Mrs. Henry Ashley purchased the old farm lands on which she often says "she learned to glean." Henry's mother lives there, in the prettiest Elizabethan cottage possible; and when the London season is over, and work grows less imperative, Henry and his wife, and Harry the third, aged nine, make a little holyday at Edendale. Almeric and I are going down there this autumn to a regular English harvest-home; and Mrs. Ashley has, in the spirit of a good Christian, invited Katherine Loftus to meet us: but Katherine will not come, for Almeric has transferred his affections to Mary, and I have had the oddest dreams lately about wedding-bells in the little church at Edendale, and good Mr. Congreve's voice pronouncing a blessing, in which we all desire to participate!

LINES.

BY MRS. W. P. O'NEILL.

THERE is no beauty like the halo bright
  Which Love around its object flings;
That which we love grows lovely in our sight
  Above all costly things:
So here, amid the bright, the fair, the gay,
Where roses bloom and silver fountains play,
My soul is sad, my thoughts are far away,
  For thou art absent! and I cannot see
  Beauty in aught, beloved friend, save thee.

"THE LOVED ARE LOVELY."

BY MRS. NEPTUNE BLOOD GALLWEY.

"Let us look on earth and see how mortals fare; let us look upon their imagined happiness; let us laugh (as we view) at our fairer fortune, children of the air as we be," said the beautiful fairy Melaie; "come, sister, let us shake our wings and blow contempt upon the drowsy herd beneath."

"We will first acquaint our Queen," said the graver Io in answer; "we can then, if you will, my sister, look upon mortals,—not with contempt, not with derision. Oh, there are love and joy among them even as here, though they ride not upon the sunbeam, nor sport through the air with the tinted cloud as a mantle. Yet, oh yet, there are peace and love among them."

"And is love not here, Io? Look at the prince who loves me. Was there ever a face or form more dazzling? And he who tries for your hand, is he not a match that our Queen might envy?"

"I love him not, Melaie."

"And why? Doth the mortal with his soul of clay surpass him? He whom we saw slaking his thirst at the fountain yonder, some few suns past, was he like thy love or mine?"

"Thine! judge thou,—I have none among my brethren! Let us away and make thy request."

Why was Io so late in fluttering her gossamer wings?

Why did she delay emerging from the jessamine-bower where they rested? Why did her heart beat and her tiny robe tremble over it? Why was her beautiful eye dim and her cheek pale? Ah, had her doom been spoken, and did she love mortal? Woe, woe to the guilty child of the air!

* * * * *

Away, away they fly, over moor and valley, through the garden and the graveyard, near the castle and the prison, by the proud one and the humble. Away they speed; and nought is seen but a cloud of rare brightness, with a zephyr that sighs like a scented breath.

"Let us pause here, sister," said Io; "I am weary; and see, there is a fragrant parterre: let us view mortal intentions here."

The sun was bright, and those spirits that sought adventure basked in the glow beneath the leafy shade of the rhododendron; from the deep cups of the delicate blossom they drank and laughed, as they knew not mortal sorrow.

"Hush! some one speaks," warned the watchful Io; "restrain thy gaiety, sister,—look beyond, there come children of the earth."

A young man, in his strength and manhood, passed by, while on his arm leaned a fair and delicate girl; she looked up with a smile of thrilling beauty, and read from his dark eyes vows which always seemed new.

"Why do you love me thus, dearest Nell? Why do you gaze into my face with such a wondrous power? I can almost fancy I am worthy of such a treasure when I see it. I can imagine myself a reflexion of your own beauty."

"Hush, Raymond; I love thee! Knowest thou not 'the loved are lovely?'"

"Weak mortals! their love will die, their hearts grow into dust as their bodies," said the impatient Melaie.

"Nay, sister; but the fragrance remains, and their souls may mingle for ever.—It is love and loveliness."

* * * * *

Away, away they fly: their wings are spread, and the balmy air adds an impulse to haste. 'T is the speed of lightning! 'T is the course of time! 'T is life itself vanishing while we exist! And the tinted cloud gilds the cradle, the altar, and the tomb!

"Here is a grand castle, and liveried menials; let us hover near and watch them. I see an open window, and a vase of plants from the conservatory: we will rest among them, Io."

Within the shelter of the broad leaves they reclined, and looked into a room which presented a world of wealth, comfort, and affluence; but among the velvet draperies and in the richest gildings there crouched, grim and ghastly, the exacting tyrant *Death!* It was a bed-room, and upon the costly bed there lay a dying boy: the Earl's coronet glittered above him; the coverlet on which he rested was embroidered with the same emblem; the sheets were of the most delicate texture: but amid all these decay and death were busy; the bloated features told of sufferings, the parched lip wide open of agonies, the wasted body and difficult breathings of mortality. Helpless, heedless, almost senseless, lay the youth, but not alone: there knelt one so anxious beside him with her hand on his, forgetful of disease and danger, pouring a costly perfume over him; the rich robe swept around, and with head bent down she prayed long and fervently. A murmur from the sufferer caused her to look up; that grand and queen-like lady trembled at the well-known moan of pain.

"My darling, what can I do for thee? Pray with me, my only life and joy."

"Mother, what is that?"

How the eyes rolled, and the brow grew dark, in that wild attempt to utter !

"It is but the little timepiece, yonder, my child : it struck the hour. Let us pray."

"It struck the hour for me, mother ! — I am — going — dying — mother, dear !"

"Oh, Alfred, my darling, that I might die for thee or with thee !"

A passionate cry of a broken heart sounded through the room ; a mother's voice of despair was heard — a clasped corpse was to her bosom — a shriek of madness rent the air.

"How I condemn her !" said Melaie. "She was still young, so beautiful, and so rich, to clasp such hideous clay. Look ! she kisses his face, stained already with decay."

"Hush, Melaie ! oh, respect such exquisite feelings in a mother's heart, — such glorious lights in human nature. He was her all in this world, and thou knowest 'the loved are lovely.'"

* * * * *

Away, away they fly, careering over the green fields, and pursuing further knowledge.

"There is a fountain, let us abide for a little ; I am weary and faint, sister," whispered Io ; and her silver wings drooped with a languid air.

"Be it so, lazy one," was the answer ; and by the dripping rock, near the musical waterfall, they sat down.

"Such a vile flower ! — look at it, Io — there, with the yellow head and coarse rough leaf. If I were lord of this land I should dig it out, or set fire to everything so hideous."

A gentle breeze sprung up and a voice came with a sighing melody. "Hush ! it is the flower," said Io ; and the voice said, —

"Blame me not, I am not of my own formation, and though unsightly, I am sought after by the young and lovely : I am endowed with a healing quality, and many a lover has blessed

the field-flower dandelion, and loved me dearer than the moss-rose."

"Verily it is true, Melaie: take advice, my sister. Are not 'the loved, indeed, lovely?'"

* * * * *

Away, away they fly; and as they dash through the air with the faint rustle which a leaf might make in falling, they scan hastily the earth, so varying, yet so beautiful: their eyes glance upon the golden meadow and the dark grove of fir, upon the barren moor and the glassy lake, upon the flower wreath and the thorns of the thicket, upon the roaring ocean and the peaceful glade.

"Hast thou not yet learnt that mortals are wiser and better than we, my sister? The sun declines; we had better speed on our return. If thou wilt confess, for thou dost believe, Melaie——"

"Nay, Io! in truth I love not mortal, and I despise his creed. I fear me, sister, thou art recreant. Have a care!"

"I care not," said Io, with a wild impetuosity unusual to her: "it is odious this life of ours: rather would I be mortal, and to feel as they do, joy and sorrow, to be loved and loving. To-night I will publish this to our Queen."

"Benighted one! 't is death, knowest thou. Think of our life of sunshine, Io."

"Hush! I do hate it. Let us enter that cottage yonder; let us view mortal in humble station."

The cottage door stood open, and the children of the air looked around: all was neatness, quiet, order, simplicity; a lady sat alone working, her curls shading her face; a book lay open there, but she read not—her fingers moved hastily, and a tear fell upon the work. Io looked; Melaie smiled with bitterness. A step drew near, and a young man entered. He moved directly to the lady, and with a fond embrace pressed a bunch of violets into her hand.

"They are thy emblems, my Emily, my darling wife. But are those tears which stain thy bright eyes? Art thou happy, dear one?"

"Too happy, my husband; my tears were of grateful omen: thou art so dear, so good, so true, so fond, so beautiful,—and I ——"

"Thou art my guardian angel,—thou art loved and lovely."

* * * * *

The moonlight hour was bright, and the field where the fairy rings sparkled under that beam was a scene of deep interest to the winged children of the air, who held a court of justice at the witching hour. Around stood the band, their silver wings and gossamer dresses floating gracefully in the fresh breeze. Before them was seated their Queen, so dazzling in her golden crown and starry robe: at her right hand were the judges, with grave aspect and solemn frown; on her left stood Melaie the accuser, and Io was prostrate in the centre — the guilty one to be condemned.

"Speak, girl!" said the voice of majesty, and it was gentle as woman's when breathing of hope; "say thou dost repent—say thou wilt return to thy lover—say thou dost not covet a mortal life, and I will save thee."

"I care not, gracious lady—I do love a mortal and may not be false. Oh, to be loved as they are, not as these!"

"'T is enough, Io, thou art doomed," said an iron voice from among the judges; "we sentence thee ——"

"Nay," said the merciful Queen, "she has been ever gentle; let her choose her own transformation: we will it."

There was a pause, and no appeal, for Io was a favourite amongst them.

"Thanks!" she murmured; "let me be the violet sweet—the child of fragrance—the flower of the garden and field—the sought-for timid emblem of woman—the heart so true and loving, which makes her lovely."

THE RUINED CASTLE BY SUNLIGHT.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Not by the glimmer of the moon's pale ray
  First gazed I on those ruins lone and hoary;
I saw them in the glowing noon of day,
  When sunbeams shed on them a sparkling glory.

Amid the crumbled fragments flowers arose,
  And bloomed, unguarded by a jealous warden;
Fresh in their young luxuriance, as those
  That flourish in the fair and stately garden.

Birds, too, were there; a joyous, light-winged throng,
  Trilling in liquid tones their warbling measure;
More sweet had sounded not the choral song,
  If poured within the cultured bowers of Pleasure.

The blue and cloudless skies looked down serene
  Upon the moss-grown walls; soft gales were wooing
The ivied turrets; I had never seen
  So gay, so bright, so beautiful a ruin!

I lingered there, and marvelled much the while,
  That bards and artists never should grow weary
Of dimly picturing the ruined pile,
  Allied to objects sorrowful and dreary.

Why do they seek it not at genial hours,
And to its aspect tardy justice render;
Painting it rich in verdure and in flowers,
And brightened with the sun's meridian splendour?

But more I marvelled, how ungrateful man,
Of fallen fortunes wilfully complaining,
Should, in his peevish pride, forbear to scan
The store of blessings to his share remaining.

What though he view, in broken heaps around,
The mocking wreck of many a noble vision;
Though Fame's proud towers be levelled with the ground,
Though cleft the glittering temple of Ambition?

Yet Peace, with soothing voice and dove-like wing,
Pours her sweet music in the dwelling shattered;
Fair blossoms still around the ruin cling,
And verdure o'er the rugged waste is scattered;

A light divine amid the darkness opes—
God with each evil sends a mitigation;
And never o'er the ruin of our hopes
Casts He the veil of utter desolation!

THE BRIDE.

BY MRS. NEWTON CROSLAND.

"But, Aunt Ann, an invitation to a wedding is like a royal command,—you must go!"

"Indeed, my dears, I shall not," was the calm, but very decided rejoinder of Miss Pemberton, as she netted away with great industry, to the importunities of her young nieces, two light-hearted girls, scarcely yet escaped from the school-room, and to whom everything in the shape of gaiety was a novelty and a delight.

"Aunt, we should have liked you to go so much!" resumed Julia, in a coaxing tone.

"And if not at the church, why could you not join the party at breakfast?" asked Emily, the elder.

"My dear girls, you have often heard me say I never go to weddings."

"But not when it is our particular friend that is to be married, and we are to be bridemaids?" continued Emily.

"I declare they 'll say you have turned shabby, and won't afford a new bonnet!" exclaimed Julia, with the pertness of a pet child.

"Then I 'll patronise the jeweller instead of the milliner, and send a costlier bracelet than I intended to the bride."

"Darling aunty, you know I only jested: nobody ever could call you shabby. Yet why, why are you so resolved?"

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes, pray do!"

"Because I have only painful recollections of the marriages at which, in my own young days, I was present, and at which I officiated as bridemaid. And once since, in later years—it was too sad a story for you to hear at the time; but I vowed that I never would be a wedding guest again."

"Do you mean to say, that if we were to be married you would not come to our weddings?"

"Indeed I do," said Miss Pemberton, gravely; "for I have learned to look upon myself as a bird of ill omen, and I leave you to judge if I would willingly spread the shadow of my wings over your happiness."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed the two girls, simultaneously; but, somehow or other, they were nestling by her side, and interrupting the netting. Emily had taken her aunt's hand, and Julia was leaning her head on Miss Pemberton's shoulder.

"Now, tell us all about it," cried Emily.

"Yes, do; for you know we are not children now," continued Julia, with the womanly consequence of seventeen.

"I think I will. My reminiscences may point a moral, and teach you, at any rate, not to marry in haste and repent at leisure. I was about your age when I first appeared as bridemaid to a dear friend and schoolfellow—an heiress, I should tell you, and a good and clever girl."

Miss Pemberton paused a moment, perhaps unconsciously, and Julia said,—

"Was she pretty?"

"No, my dear, she was not. Nay, I will own she was slightly deformed; yet if her friends could love her so well, why should not her husband? But he did not. After spending nine-tenths of her fortune, the wretch left her to bring up two

children on the sum which had been settled on her for pin-money. That was the first time I was bridemaid."

"And the next?"

"The marriage was scarcely more fortunate. In this case the wife ran away from her husband. Do not mistake me. She ran away to the shelter of her father's house, to escape positive ill-usage: and she, too, had a fortune. Be thankful, chits, that you have nothing but what your father and I choose to give you, and to leave you; and unless you marry perfect paragons, you may depend upon it your husbands shall have small control over your fortunes."

"Oh, aunt! And the third time you were bridemaid, was the bride rich then?"

"No; she was the daughter of a poor clergyman, who with difficulty scraped together thirty pounds for her *trousseau;* and she married a poor captain in a marching regiment."

"They did not run away from each other, I hope?"

"No; but his regiment was ordered to the West Indies: she insisted on accompanying him, and they both died of yellow fever within the year."

"How very sad!" sighed the two girls.

"Yet I look upon that as the happiest of the three occasions on which I was present. As years passed on, and my young friends and contemporaries married off, I was frequently asked to be bridemaid; but I had only to tell the tale of those three disastrous marriages, to communicate my own superstition on the subject, and be excused."

"But, aunty, you are not asked to be bridemaid now," interposed Emily.

"So they told me three years ago, when they overruled my objections, and Madeline Forster persuaded me to be with her on the day appointed for her marriage; indeed I was her guest, and scarcely left her side for the preceding week. Now listen

to her history, and judge if I *can* have any *penchant* left for bridecake and wedding favours.

"Madeline was an orphan, the surviving younger sister of one of my dearest friends; and because I had been her dead sister's friend, she attached herself to me in that quiet, determined manner, which was appropriate to her character. She was rich and handsome, and, of course, she had lovers in abundance. A natural shyness of disposition, however, kept several of them at bay; for commonplace people could not understand her, and knew not what point to attack—through what tastes to please, or what feelings to touch, her. I heard one man call her a learned lady, of whom he was afraid, while I know that another considered her a simpleton. They were both equally wrong. Madeline Forster was a true woman, with some of the attributes of her sex carried to an extreme; and her education, like that of most of us, had been desultory rather than sterling. Brought up in the shelter of her uncle's family, with a large allowance of pocket-money from her guardians in girlhood, and uncontrolled mistress of her fortune at one-and-twenty, it was only the pretence of authority that was exercised over her for many years. But though she had decision of character, and even the self-will which often belongs to a shy person, her inclinations were so right, and her temper was generally so amiable, that her elders very seldom wished to control her.

"She was in no hurry to choose a husband; indeed she must have been two or three-and-twenty before her heart was at all touched. Her cousin Geoffrey was at one time sincerely attached to her; but she burst into tears when she heard of it, and besought him so earnestly not to think of her except as a cousin or sister, which she declared were just the same things, that he felt it was in vain to persevere, and manfully struggled to do as she desired him. Her conduct was so wholly free from coquetry, that he could not but respect and esteem her: his

love perished for want of its natural element, Hope; but his heart being susceptible without being fickle, he transferred his affections to one who secured by returning them; and when himself a happy husband, he had a sad opportunity of playing a brother's part by Madeline.

"At last it was rumoured that Madeline Forster was not insensible to the attentions of a suitor, a certain Mr. Frederick Radnor being named in association with her; and one day she threw herself upon my neck and owned that she loved him dearly, that he had asked her to be his wife, and that he was on the point of addressing her uncle on the subject. I had no reasonable objection to urge; and therefore, though I did not personally like Mr. Radnor, I was obliged to offer my congratulations. My dislike put me so much in the minority that I kept it rather to myself, for he was decidedly a popular person in society,—good-looking, well-mannered, and an excellent conversationalist. Having travelled a good deal, the last gift was widened in its scope. He was the younger son of a baronet, and had only a small government appointment; but then Madeline's fortune was enough for both, and so they were engaged. Madeline's uncle represented to her that it was not what the world would call a good match for her, but he could not thwart her, and did not wish to distress her by opposition; and besides, he really had nothing of which to accuse the *fiancé*, except the smallness of his income.

"I have said that I was in the minority; but Geoffrey Forster, at any rate, shared my feelings of dislike. We agreed that Mr. Radnor was a hypocrite; yet when we questioned ourselves to declare in what particular, we were equally at fault. We could see that Madeline, who had high chivalrous notions of honour and propriety, had been caught by the *very proper* manner in which Frederick Radnor expressed himself when faults or follies were the topic of conversation; and though it is

delightful to listen to the earnest expression of virtuous sentiments, they are apt to lose their edifying properties when dragged on to the froth of frivolous discourse, or through the mire of vituperations on our neighbours. Suddenly the idea possessed me that this pattern of perfection had himself been guilty of some grave fault which he studiously desired to mask, and Geoffrey and I set ourselves diligently to discover what it could be.

"All this while the time appointed for the marriage was drawing near. A house in town was taken, half the furniture chosen, and Madeline's white *moire* and Honiton lace already ordered. Even I, having consented to be present, was only hesitating between lilac and peach-blossom brocade. To have spoken our suspicions to Madeline herself, built as they were upon our mere feelings and opinions, would have seemed an insult, which, perhaps, she might have resented by an immediate marriage; and to have betrayed them to others, would have been equally mean and useless. We were obliged, therefore, to let things take their course, Geoffrey making the most of the brief time which remained to hunt up particulars of Mr. Radnor's life. He found out some of his college companions, and ascertained that his career at the University had been respectable, if not brilliant; and, indeed, in the course of these inquiries, so much that was fair and creditable came to the surface, that we began to believe we had done injustice to Madeline's *fiancé*, and felt something like remorse for the evil opinion we had entertained. I decided on the lilac *glacé* brocade with less forebodings than I could have thought possible a month before, and was deep in consultation about other fineries when a note from Madeline was delivered to me. It was a brief impromptu invitation to dine at her uncle's that day, to meet some strangers who had brought letters of introduction from Rome. Mr. Radnor and Geoffrey Forster were of the

party, and the principal guests proved to be an Italian count and countess, who were paying their first visit to England. Madeline, knowing that Frederick Radnor had been in Italy, relied much on him to break down the first barriers of strangeness and formality with her new acquaintances; and, to do him justice, he attempted to make himself agreeable, and spoke Italian with fluency. But Geoffrey and I, who had grown into the habit of watching him, perceived that never before in our presence had he been so little at his ease. He changed colour frequently, had fits of abstraction, and had evidently lost his appetite, mincing and mangling the food on his plate, but scarcely eating at all.

"Geoffrey was the first cavalier to join the ladies; and as soon as the other gentlemen appeared in the drawing-room, and the buzz of general conversation afforded opportunity for confidential discourse, we contrived a *tête-à-tête* in a corner, and found that our suspicions had mutually revived and leaped in the same direction. We felt assured, that if there had been evil doing on the part of Frederick Radnor it was during his residence in Italy. Two days afterwards I received a visit from Geoffrey's wife, telling me her husband had set off to Rome, and had commissioned her to see me, and tell me the fact. Up to this time the young wife had thought us hard in our judgments, and had rather sympathised with the betrothed couple than approved of our *espionnage;* but her husband had now imbued her with his own ideas, and she had cheerfully relinquished his society that he might follow up the investigation, of which he fancied he had the clue.

"The next three weeks formed a miserable period for me, every preparation for the marriage going forward, while I had the sensation that all was a dream, and not a reality. I had one letter from Geoffrey, in which he entreated me, if I could think of any pretext by which to delay the wedding, to do so:

but this was impossible; the day was fixed, and the guests were invited.

"The morning itself came; a lovely June morning; and Madeline, in her bridal array, looked very charming. She had risen early, dreading hurry and flutter on such an occasion; but her maid had so faithfully completed every arrangement the day before, that the bridal toilette occupied less time than was expected: so that it came to pass that Madeline was fully equipped before her bridemaids arrived or my lilac brocade was donned. I shall never forget her interesting appearance as I entered the room. She had thrown up her veil, and, without rising, she greeted me with kind looks. I stooped to kiss her cheek, and told her not to attempt conversation; she smiled sweetly, and so far took my advice, or obeyed her own instincts, that she spoke very little. But though calm, and grave, and pale, she looked happy; and she had stolen one spray of orange-flower from the bouquet of white exotics which Radnor had sent her, to put sacredly away, suspecting the fate of the bride's bouquet would be division and subdivision among her friends.

"At this moment I heard some vehicle draw up to the door; and curious to ascertain who were the early arrivals, I peered through the venetian blinds to see. It was a common cab which was there; and before the driver had performed his blundering knock, not wedding guests, but Geoffrey Forster descended. He was followed by a Catholic priest, who led a little girl of four years old by the hand.

"I knew that some terrible revelation was approaching; and as for a few seconds I literally gasped for breath, it was only by a strong effort that I refrained from crying out. I remember looking at poor Madeline, and feeling that 'the bride' was to be no bride after all. Tears had already filled my eyes when a servant entered the room, and whispered that I was wanted. I obeyed, tottering out of the room, and in another

E H Corbould

minute grasped the hand of Geoffrey Forster. He had already demanded an audience of Madeline's uncle, who was his uncle also; but that staid personage was attiring himself to enact the part of 'father,' and before he appeared I had heard the story which Geoffrey had travelled night and day to tell.

"Frederick Radnor had been married to a beautiful Italian girl five years before; a wife who had died literally of a broken heart, consequent on his desertion. She was of humble birth, but had been a sort of *protégée* of the count and countess who had brought a letter of introduction to Madeline; hence the culprit's confusion, although personally unknown to them. The hapless Rosetta—half lady's-maid, half humble friend—had been sent—lent would, perhaps, be the better word—to a friend of the countess, residing at Florence. There Frederick Radnor had seen her, been fascinated with her beauty, and made her his own.

"By the ordinances of *her* church she was his wife; and when wearied of his toy, he acknowledged that he was known to her only by a false name, defied her to establish her claim, and then left her side without there remaining a clue by which to follow or identify him. She sought the refuge of the convent, where her child was born, and where, a few months afterwards, she expired. She had offended her protectors by her first rash step, and was too humble in her wretchedness to believe she could be forgiven. The nuns did not seek investigation, lest the child should be snatched from them and given up to a heretic father. Only in company of the priest who had performed the marriage ceremony would they permit the little creature to travel to England, and after Geoffrey Forster's persuasions had been strengthened by his gold.

"It would be a long tale to tell how he unravelled this complicated history. It is enough that he arrived in London one hour before his cousin Madeline was to have met Frederick

Radnor at the altar. I cannot describe to you the scene which ensued, or the fortitude and right womanly bearing which Madeline maintained. The expectant bridegroom waited long at the church; and just when wonder at the delay was merging into vague apprehension, instead of the wedding party, a messenger arrived to intimate there would be no marriage that day, and to summon him to Madeline's side. She received him with his child on her knee, and the Italian priest standing opposite. At a glance he saw that all was known; turned pale, as if he were about to faint; then rallied, and tried to brave out his misdeeds. At first he denied the marriage, and laughed at the proofs which were produced.

"'Be it so,' said Madeline, calmly. 'Then I thank God for saving me from a union with the betrayer of another woman!'

"And when, seeing that this was his weakest argument, he exclaimed,—

"'But if she were my wife, she is dead; why should I not marry again?'

"'True,' replied Madeline, bitterly: 'if after this record of your kindness and fidelity, any woman can be bold enough to take you for a husband!'

"'Tush! what have wives to do with youthful follies?'

"Madeline was not given to gesticulation; but now she raised her hands to Heaven, and once more exclaimed,—

"'Oh, God, I thank Thee for saving me!' Then bursting into tears, she continued, 'Follies! oh, when will vice and crime, and heartless inhumanity, be called by their right names? I do dread that some women will not see this hideous history in the light that I do! When will they universally learn to scorn the profligate, and thus avenge each other?' Then she sank into a chair, and lifting the frightened child on to her knee, threw round its neck the gold chain she had worn, giving only

one momentary look at the miniature which was attached to it. 'This portrait belongs rightly here,' she said, addressing the priest, but still holding the child; 'and I beg you to observe it is my gift. It may serve in future to identify the father who has deserted her. Oh, the poor mother!' continued Madeline, with a fresh burst of tears, 'from what woe has this knowledge of you saved me!'

"You may fancy, my dear girls, some of the details of that day,—Mr. Radnor's ignominious retreat, the disrobing of poor Madeline, the dismissal of the wedding guests, and the melancholy aspect of the unbroken bridecake and untouched breakfast. There was feasting in the kitchen, I believe, and not a few poor families regaled themselves that day on dainties they had never tasted before. Everybody strove to remove the associations of the day as quickly as possible; and Madeline behaved so admirably that she rivetted the love and esteem of all who knew her. The shock had been rude, but she was cured. In place of love, there reigned contempt; and after a few months had passed, and the change of scene which her relations contrived for her, Madeline Forster was as heartwhole as ever."

"But could she have been really in love with such a bad man?" asked Emily, as Miss Pemberton concluded.

"My dear girl, the 'really in love,' and the 'fancying in love,' are so difficult for the lookers-on to distinguish, that I for one must decline giving judgment on such matters. All I have quite decided on is never, never, to go to another wedding!"

"But, aunt, that was no wedding at all," exclaimed Julia. "The bride was no bride, after all; and really it seems to me that you and the cousin Geoffrey were the good genii of her fate."

"That may be; but will it destroy all interest in her if I tell you that Madeline really and truly was a bride last summer,

her second choice falling worthily and wisely? And yet I resisted *her* entreaties, and refused to be present. Now do you think you have any chance of persuading me?"

"I am afraid not," sighed Emily; and then she added, "I am a little sorry she married: I think she ought to have remained single."

"You will change your opinion some day," said Miss Pemberton, with a smile.

"Indeed, yes," exclaimed Julia; "that would have been nonsense, when you know she could not have been really in love, and must have despised such a bad man."

"But do people never fall *really* in love with a bad man?" said Emily.

"I wish they never did," replied Miss Pemberton, with such emotion that her nieces feared they had pained her, and recalled some memories of her own life. "Take care, dear girls," she continued, "that *you* never give your hearts to unworthy lovers!"

THE KING'S DEVICE.

BY SHIRLEY BROOKS.

WHERE mail-clad ranks are marching,
  Where War's grim favourites ride,
Where champing steeds are arching
  Bright necks in graceful pride;
Where armed Castile 's defying
  The fierce array of France,
From Zara's coldness flying
  Luniga waves his lance.

'T is o'er, that morn of slaughter;
  King Charles has sent to tell
Castile's unequalled daughter
  How young Luniga fell;
How, while red steel was clashing,
  And clarion voices cried,
Through the foemen's phalanx crashing
  He broke their ranks, and died.

The youth her scorn had slighted,
  Yon bending Palmer said,
The King's own hand had knighted,
  While the brave spirit fled.
What wild remorse is painting
  Poor Zara's matchless charms?
And where is Zara fainting?
  Ah, in Luniga's arms!

LEENA.

A TRUE TALE OF SELF-DEVOTION.

BY GEORGINA C. MUNRO.

BRILLIANTLY the summer's sun was shining on the dark rocks and glittering sands of a little bay near Africa's most southern cape, and on the calm waters of the South Atlantic Ocean, which stretched afar to the dim horizon, blue as the cloudless skies they mirrored. Noontide was long past, and in the shadow which a tall cliff cast upon the shore sat two young girls of widely different appearance. One, the elder and fairer, had the pale golden hair, snowy brow, and soft blue eyes, which the children of the Netherlands have brought to that sunny clime. Very lovely she was, yet scarce more beautiful than the slave who sat working at her feet; for it was during the last days of colonial slavery. Though a slave, Leena was little darker than many an admired brunette, and her brilliant eyes, bright black hair, and regular features, were united to a form of faultless symmetry.

The lady's book was often laid aside while she and her attendant conversed together, with the frankness and almost the familiarity of friendship; for they had been playmates in childhood, and never separated since. Yet all the favour with which she was treated never tempted the inferior to forget the respect due to her mistress.

"See, Miss Memie!" suddenly exclaimed the slave, starting

to her feet, as she broke a long silence. "See, there is one—no, two persons, riding this way along the sands!"

"Indeed!" said the lady, looking towards the two horsemen, who had just appeared round one of the points bounding the little bay. "But surely they will go behind the rocks: there can be no fear, for the quicksand-marks will warn them of the danger."

"Oh, Miss Memie!" cried the girl, clasping her hands, "the whale-rib on that side is gone! I saw to-day it was not there."

"Then they are lost!—there is no time to warn them!" exclaimed Memie.

"I will fly," cried the girl; and like an antelope, in truth, she fled over the smooth white sands.

Between the strangers and the spot where they had first been seen there extended, for some twenty yards along the shore, a ridge of tall, rugged rocks, steep and abrupt on the seaward side, where no foot could have found a resting-place, while in the cavities between their peaks grew some few trees, marred and stunted by the wild wind which blew across the ocean. Within these rocks the beach was firm and safe, but toward the sea slept a treacherous quicksand, generally indicated by the usual warning marks—a whale-rib stuck upright at each extremity,—though now, by some accident, one had disappeared.

The strangers were nearer than herself to the quicksand, and there seemed little hope of gaining it before them; but Leena's foot was light, and the spirit that animated her lent to it a speed till then unknown. When she reached the rocks the horsemen were but a little way from the farther end of the ridge. She called aloud, but, breathless with her exertions, her voice was too faint to be heard. There was no time for her to pass behind the rocks, while to venture on the smooth sand seaward would be certain death. One chance of warning them alone remained, and, hastily climbing the rocks, Leena hurried

on with headlong speed, springing like a goat from ledge to ledge, and cliff to cliff, and finding footing in many a spot where one might have thought the monkey or the wild cat could alone have clung.

Still the strangers came on, and again her warning cry was unheeded; and though yet once more it rose in shriller tones, as she saw the foremost horseman on the very verge of danger, he merely looked round, but not up at her, and proceeded at a swifter pace. Already he had entered between the ocean and the cliffs—how Leena's heart sunk as she beheld it! yet on she went, and gained a projecting point near the stranger, at the very moment his horse's feet sank deep into the sand. He had ridden close to the base of the rock, and striking his spurs into the horse's sides, the animal made a wild effort to bound forward, and struggling violently floundered on perhaps a yard, bringing him directly beneath the spot where Leena stood.

Death seemed inevitable. But it generally requires a few seconds for the sands to claim their victim, and the rider was light and agile, so he sprang to his feet on the saddle, though without a hope of avoiding his threatened doom. A thrill of horror shot through the slave-girl's heart at the thought that he would perish there, within her sight, and she so near. "Oh, could she do nothing to aid him?"

At this moment the glance which she cast wildly round her rested on a dwarfed tree which overhung the face of the cliff, to within two or three feet of the stranger's reach, as now he stood. Quick as the lightning's flight, Leena, giving her whole weight to the effort, bent the yielding trunk until the branches drooped so low that he might grasp them.

"Look up! look up!" cried the girl, at the very instant that the horseman's single glance at the inaccessible precipice beside him had convinced him there was no hope.

A human voice at such a time seemed to call him back to

the world, and the life to which he was sighing a brief and wild farewell. He looked up to behold a chance of escape, while, as though knowing his fate might not be shunned, the unhappy horse, now sinking rapidly, was trembling violently, but struggling no longer. In another moment succour might have been too late for his rider. For when the gentleman, who had caught the bough with the strong grasp of a drowning man, gained, with Leena's assistance, a place of safety, and stood beside her on the rock, the glance which he cast quickly down on the scene of his past peril discerned no vestige of the valued steed that had borne him many a long mile: he had disappeared, and a rough hollow in the sand was all that remained to tell the tale. But a little while longer, and it would lie calm and smooth as though nothing had occurred.

The attendant, warned by his master's danger, had drawn back, so that there was nothing to divide the emotions thus excited. "My poor horse!" sighed the rescued man, "I little thought our parting would have been so sudden."

"Mynheer not sorry to part now?" observed Leena with a smile.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the Englishman; "and to you, under Heaven, I am indebted for not having shared his fate. Your kindness and courage I can never forget. I must learn Dutch, to be able to thank you properly," he continued, feeling the difficulty of expressing his sentiments to one little conversant with his language. "But how was it you came to be up here, to save me so fearlessly?"

"Leena's feet better than her tongue," replied the slave-girl. "See, there plenty steps down here, and Miss Memie tell you all."

Strange apologies for steps were the dents and inequalities of the rock, which favoured their descent on its landward side, but the traveller and his guide sprang lightly down them, the

mind of the former still too greatly occupied with the recent occurrence to waste a thought on the Miss Memie whose acquaintance he was promised.

Memie had followed along the shore, and from a little distance had witnessed the stranger's rescue from one of South Africa's most deadly perils. She now advanced to meet him and Leena, who sprang forward to her side.

"You have made me very proud of you to-day," said Memie, taking both the slave-girl's hands with a kind and friendly air.

The girl coloured deeply with pleasure, then, stooping to kiss one of the snowy hands which held her own, she quietly extricated her dark slender fingers, and drew back behind her mistress, who then turned to congratulate the traveller on his escape, and invite him, as the loss of his horse rendered incumbent on her hospitality, to her father's house, which was scarcely half a mile from the wild spot where they had met.

And in a few minutes more Memie de Witt was walking homeward with her strangely-made acquaintance, while Leena followed with Hammond's attendant, a handsome Malay, who, dismounted and leading his horse, was doing his utmost to ingratiate himself into her good will.

Days and weeks passed away, and still Hammond, who was on leave from India, remained at the house where he had been so accidentally introduced in one of those hours which decide at once, and ofttimes strangely, the destinies of many. At length it was known that the Englishman was to bear away the fairest flower of the district to his Indian home.

But there was one to whom, strive as she would, the announcement gave no pleasure. Leena was an Africander, a slave, though a favoured one, and seemingly as divided by condition from *them* as though seas had rolled between. Yet she had affections to be awakened, and, unhappily, a mind to

appreciate all the personal and mental advantages which had won the heart of her young mistress. And, besides, her having, through her energy and presence of mind, been the means of preserving the life of one but too well fitted to become the hero of any heart's romance, had increased her danger, by leading him ever to treat her with a consideration which might have tempted her to forget the wide gulf which separated them. But she did not forget it. She knew it was merely the remembrance of that hour which gave his voice the tone of kindness and of interest; she had no hope he would ever regard her with other feelings: she *knew* he would not—she knew at once on what his heart had staked its hopes of happiness. Yet so it was, she loved him with a love which could never die away.

As Leena's attachment was without hope, so was it without jealousy, and no thought of murmuring at the happiness of those she loved mingled with her sorrow. For very dear to her was the gentle lady whom she had served from childhood, and though she sighed over her own darker fate, it was not in bitterness.

It would have been well had all been as unsuspicious as were Hammond and the De Witts as to the nature of Leena's sentiments. But that troublesome deity, who finds worshippers in every nation, put it into the heart of Yuseif ba Deen, the Englishman's Mussulman attendant, to love the beautiful slave-girl with all the fervour and devotion of a fiery and impetuous spirit. But all in vain he proved the truth and strength of his attachment, by offering not merely to purchase Leena's freedom, but—rare, indeed, in a Malay—to abandon also the religion of Mahommed, and embrace the Christian faith, that no obstacle might oppose their union. Even had Leena consented, the relinquishing his creed would alone have been required; for it was by her own choice she was still a slave. Long since Memie would willingly have freed her, in recognition of Hammond's deep debt of gratitude; and the Englishman's liberality had given

her the means of herself obtaining it. But now, as before, Leena preferred remaining with her mistress, and cold looks and chilling words were all she granted to the Malay.

Like most of his race, Yuseif was faithful and devoted, but haughty, unforgiving, and revengeful. He was indignant at Leena's insensibility, for which his admiration of his own handsome person had but little prepared him. And bitter, indeed, was his jealousy, and fierce his resentment against the involuntary cause of her coldness, when, with the keen-sightedness of slighted love, he discovered the truth.

One day the Malay was leaning on a gate, leading to a valley where jasmine and lemon-scented geraniums were blooming wildly amid flowering myrtle, laurel, and picturesquely-grouped acacias, and his large black eyes, flashing with an intense brilliancy in which the light of affection mingled with the fire of fiercer passions, were bent on a distant path seen at intervals among the trees, along which wandered Memie de Witt and her attendant. Another person approached the gate—one to whom that spot in the distance was equally attractive. Habit enabled the Malay to recognise the step as it drew near, but, irritated by some fresh slight just received from Leena, he did not turn or move.

"Come, Yuseif," said Hammond, "open the gate, and let me pass."

The Malay took no notice, and Hammond spoke in a more imperative tone.

"Open the gate, Yuseif! Do you not hear me?"

"*Ich vil ne!*" ("I will not!") replied Yuseif; and no refusal sounds more emphatic than one couched in those words.

"What do you mean, sir?" his master angrily demanded.

"*Ich vil ne!*" repeated Yuseif, turning half round, with a sullen air.

"But you shall though!" exclaimed Hammond, losing all

patience at the impertinence. "Stand out of my way this instant, or I shall make you!"

"Master had better!" muttered the Malay, with a sneer.

"And he will, too," said the Englishman, as with a half-blow, half-push, he thrust Yuseif aside, so that he fell to the ground some paces away. Then, opening the gate, Hammond walked on, without taking the trouble to look back.

The Malay started to his feet, every feature convulsed with passion. He plunged his hand into his bosom, but no weapon met his grasp. He stamped his foot in powerless anger; then, dashing himself wildly upon the earth, he gnashed his teeth, and clenched his hands, in all the fury of unbridled rage.

"What is the matter, Yuseif?" asked a soft voice, at length.

Yuseif looked up to see Leena gazing on him in amazement and alarm, and on perceiving her he rose slowly to his feet, with a fierce scowl upon his brow.

"What is the matter?" repeated Leena, timidly.

The reply was a torrent of angry words, from which it was not easy to gather what had occurred; but when she did so, she sought earnestly, but in vain, to calm his indignation.

"Has he not struck me?" demanded the Mussulman; "and is a blow to be borne from any one, were he twenty times my master?"

"But why provoke him so?" asked the slave-girl, quietly.

"Because—because, Leena, you love him!—and more shame to you to do so!" retorted the Malay, his eyes flashing fire.

The girl coloured deeply beneath his glance, then the blood forsook her cheek, as the chill of fear gathered round her heart—fear, not for herself, but for him who was too often in her thoughts.

"You are mad, Yuseif," said she, calmly. "Your master will be Miss Memie's husband, and you know how I love her, or I should not, of my own choice, stay to be her slave."

"Her slave!" repeated Yuseif, indignantly. "How can any one be still a slave, when she could be free, and loved, and happy? But 'tis you are mad! A spell is on you, girl; and you throw away, like a withered leaf, the heart that loves you, to dream of the proud Englishman, who thinks more of one of your Miss Memie's fair curls than of you altogether!"

And as he concluded, Yuseif turned on his heel and strode away, leaving Leena overpowered with shame and grief at his accusations and his anger against Hammond. Yet those feelings passed almost away, when the next day Yuseif sought her, and implored pardon for his wild and insulting words.

The Malay's quiet and deferential demeanour offered silently the same apology to his master; and as he had ever heretofore proved faithful and attentive, Hammond was content to pass over the impertinence he had at the time sufficiently punished. And in two or three weeks that one unexplained occurrence had nearly died away from the master's memory, as it seemed to have done from the attendant's.

It was a beautiful day—well do I remember it—when Memie de Witt and her four thoughtless bridemaids stole away from the crowd of guests that thronged the house, to spend a few hours in wandering amid the wild scenery near her home. Hammond had ridden over to the neighbouring town of George with Memie's brother, and as she desired no other intrusion on her last day of girlish freedom, no intimation was left of whither we were gone.

We were a very merry party, for the gentle bride-elect was the eldest of our number, and happy hearts and buoyant spirits—fearless of all the dark clouds which life might bring to overshadow the sunshine of the present—made the hours pass rapidly and gaily. Hither and thither we roamed; scrambling through deep dells, where the jungle well-nigh defied our passage; over rocky hills, where the aloe scarce found space to

strike its roots into the earth; and to that spot on the cliff where Leena saved the life of Hammond. Thence we cast stones into the quicksand, and laughed to see them disappear; then, unheeding the emblem, we bent our steps homeward, gathering the fairest wild flowers as we passed.

Near the house we met Franz de Witt. "What, are you back already?" said his sister.

"Yes—this hour past, and Hammond is quite disconsolate at not knowing where to look for you."

Franz left us, and we went on along a path shaded by mimosas until within a few yards of the dwelling, which was surrounded by a low stoep, or veranda, with a wall, interrupted here and there by flights of steps. Just before we lost the shelter of the trees we observed a form glide along beneath the stoep, then, springing up the steps, disappear through the open window of one of the sitting-rooms.

"That is Yuseif ba Deen, Mr. Hammond's Malay servant," said Memie, in reply to an inquiry; "but it is unusual for him to go in that way."

I thought so, too, though aware that in Dutch houses the servants make themselves tolerably at home, and as by common consent we all hurried onward, and, following Yuseif's example, hastened up the steps, and to the window.

I shall never forget the scene we there beheld. On a sofa lay Hammond, sleeping calmly, while beside him stood the Malay—in appearance the very incarnation of the demon of revenge—with a knife, or creese, in his hand, upraised to strike. Memie grasped my arm until her fingers appeared to grow into it, and uttered a piercing cry as Yuseif's hand fell downward. But at that very instant a door beside the sofa was burst open, and the slave-girl Leena caught Yuseif's arm ere the weapon was struck home.

A fearful struggle followed, bewildering to the eye which

could not note its progress, as with one impulse we useless girls sprang forward. But ere we had crossed the wide room the struggle was over, and Yuseif was a prisoner in the hands of three of the De Witts' slaves, whom Memie's cry had summoned; while Hammond, severely wounded, was supporting Leena, who had received a deep stab in her exertions to save his life.

A terrible oath, a withering glance, and an impatient stamp, were the indications of Yuseif's passion, as he looked on Leena, thus resting on Hammond's arm. But when one of the slaves who held him exclaimed, "You have killed her! she will die!" the furious look changed to one of despair, and he allowed himself to be led away in silence.

All the exertions of skill and kindness were lavished on Leena, but in vain, for but a few days longer did the noble spirit of the slave-girl linger on the earth, before it passed away to that brighter land where there are no shadows and no tears. Yet, ere it fled, the knowledge that the sacrifice was not in vain came to gild the last fleeting hours of existence; and the thought that Hammond's life and Memie's happiness were purchased by her death, gave to it the gladness which Leena felt had passed for ever from her life.

But they whose happiness had been thus dearly bought, long and deeply they mourned, as for a sister, for the generous and devoted Leena. And many months had fleeted by ere the shadow of her fate passed sufficiently for Memie to summon again the young friends who, with brows graver, and smiles less thoughtless than of old, attended her at the bridal, which before had been so fearfully prevented.

THE BEREAVED SLAVE-MOTHER.

SUGGESTED BY "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN."

BY LOUISA COURTENAY PEACH.

Moonlight wraps the dark-red river,
  Down its stream a vessel bends,
Bearing on her living cargo,
  Torn from husbands, home, and friends.
All the wretched slaves are sleeping,
  Closely huddled on the ground,
Save one young and hapless creature,
  Waking, gazes madly round!
Listen to her tones of anguish,
  Rending are her accents wild:—
"Is there none on earth to pity?
  They have taken, sold my child!
And they thought that I could linger
  In this weary world alone!
Dream on, Haley — count your dollars —
  Morn will find your victim gone.
I have heard of happy regions
  Far beyond the star-lit sky,
Where there dwells a God of mercy,—
  To these worlds of bliss I fly.

Hear my cry, O thou Almighty!
  Hear a wretched mother's prayer;
Take in mercy, take my baby,
  Let him to thy kingdom share!"

* * * *

Every search is made for Lucy,
  Questions are of no avail;
Till poor Tom, half blind with weeping,
  Simply tells his mournful tale:—
"I was half asleep, and dreaming
  Of my dear Kentucky home,
When I heard a woman sobbing,
  'Lord, have mercy! Lord, I come!'
Something in the moonlight flitted,
  And I heard a heavy fall;
I rose—poor Lucy's place was vacant:
  Massa, I have told you all!"

* * * *

He notes her death among his losses,
  Thinks not of the soul that's fled;
Man! there will be retribution!
  Know, *her* blood is on thy head!

AN EPISTLE TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS SHADE OF JOSEPH ADDISON, Esq.

ACCIDENTALLY FOUND BY MISS MARIA NORRIS.

Methuselah Club, Sept. 9, 1853.

Dear Mr. Addison,

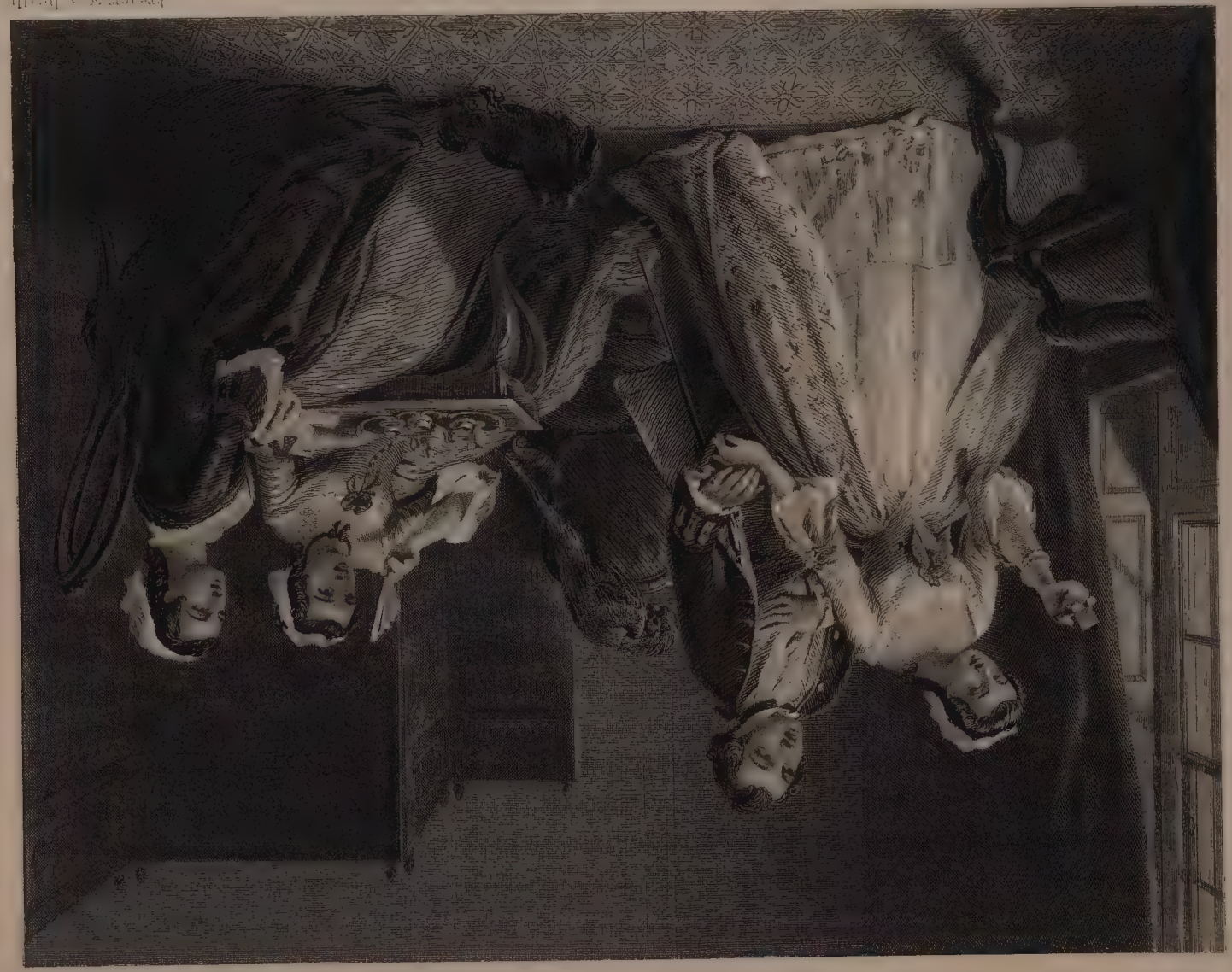
When Ulysses had traversed the gloomy land of the Cimmerians and found himself in the regions of the departed, you will recollect that the shades with whom he conversed were very particular to inquire after those who had survived and succeeded them. I believe it not unlikely that you may indulge a kindred curiosity, and should think myself unpardonable to let slip an opportunity of obliging a person who holds such a high place in my regard as Mr. Addison, even if the rate of postage were still unreduced. Postage was, in our early days, a troublesome affair to a poor author; but, thanks to Mr. Rowland Hill, most of us can now afford to write to our friends. So you see, my dear Mr. Addison, our postal arrangements have improved since your time, though I hardly know whether you would consider it an improvement to deprive members of parliament of their franking privileges. But who would frank when the charge is only a penny?

It is some time, as you know, since you and poor Richard Steele introduced me to Mr. Spectator and his friends. I as-

sure you, I shall never forget my first meeting with the venerable gentleman: to one of his cheerful company you are in some sort indebted for the present communication, for the sight of the accompanying engraving which portrays Will Honeycomb, the arbiter of taste and fine manners, playing his mistress that pretty trick with the snuff-box, served to remind me how long it was since I had heard of Mr. Addison. The memory of that pleasant brotherhood, now, alas! all departed, is almost too melancholy. As for Sir Roger de Coverley, I dare not trust myself to say too much about him; but this I know, had I been the widow, he should have fared better. Widow, forsooth! such fantastical coquettes ought to be well rewarded for their pains. I hope the beloved knight has quite ceased to feel any interest in the artful creature. Pray give him my kind regards.

Sir Roger's chaplain, who was recommended by his patron to read Tillotson and South, in preference to bad sermons of his own composing, would be, perhaps, a little astonished could he return to this mortal state and undertake "duty" for one of our fashionable London clergymen. The worthy man would have a difficulty in recognising so much ornament as the appropriate fitting of a sober English church. And if he were to listen to some of our clergy, not forgetting what he used to read from Tillotson and South, I think he would feel disposed to offer the said ecclesiastics the reversion of Sir Roger's advice. I am certain he would be delighted to find us much improved in our conversation: it is a very rare thing, indeed, to hear an oath from any but the lowest class, while, in our young days, not only gentlemen, but even the arbiters of morals, were not ashamed to interlard their table-talk pretty plentifully with strong expressions.

Sir Andrew Freeport, if he had not been gathered to his fathers before, would be just in his element among us. The spread of commerce I cannot possibly describe to you, nor the



various circumstances which have given it an impetus unknown in your times; suffice it to say, that friendly hands beckon from every shore, inviting us to exchange the various goods which Providence, no doubt, scattered in the distribution, that no one part of the human family might be independent of the rest. As civilisation progresses, each country grows more important as connected with its neighbours, more insignificant and self-insufficient taken as an isolated district. So we work gradually towards one great brotherhood, scarcely dreamed of when you and I were young.

Pray don't think I mean any offence if I hint at another improvement: I am sure I, who well knew my Lady Warwick and her vixenish temper, cannot blame you for sneaking off to White's or Button's to chat with a friend, and I won't be hard upon you, under the circumstances, for indulging now and then in a cup beyond the merry cup; but you ought to know, that the men of the present day are much more moderate drinkers than formerly. You had better not let Steele see this part of the letter—if you show him my epistle at all—for I know how apt he is to be melancholy at any little reflection on foibles that are his own. As for ladies drinking, in the present times such things are scarcely ever heard of; but you remember formerly, Mr. Pope considered the Duchess of Richmond to have quite excused herself for failing to attend a party, when she wrote the next day and said, "she was too drunk." I quote the Duchess's own words—"too drunk" to come. Such behaviour and such an expression would be now considered beneath any gentlewoman, to say nothing of Duchesses.

A propos of my Lady Warwick: one joke concerning her and you I read the other day, and it recalled our former times. This was it:—"Holland House, large though it be, cannot contain the Countess of Warwick, Mr. Addison, and one guest —Peace." Ah, my dear sir, how forcibly did I and all your

best friends dissuade you from that match: but you took your own way, and had to repent it. I hope she has ceased to torment you.

I have so many things to say that I scarcely know where to commence, and shall, I am certain, be forced to leave many topics which might interest and amuse you; but a word about travelling I must give. What a weary business was it in our times to come any distance in the coaches we then thought quick! What nights on the road, at fine old inns! what alarms of highwaymen and overturns! A man then got some credit as a traveller, if he had been once or twice from London to York; and to have been to Scotland or to Paris, made a sort of reputation. But now, my dear Mr. Addison, everywhere is so near everywhere, that nobody can get any credit for going anywhere. You will object, that the world is as large as it used to be—you are mistaken: in our young days India was long months from England; but now a magician named Waghorn (I am sorry to say he got but shabby treatment for his pains), has brought those shores within a few weeks of us. What do you say to that? The steam that formerly occupied your vagrant mind while Lady Warwick scolded you, and which you watched as it curled from her urn, seeing in the wreathed vapour some fresh visions of dear Sir Roger ——, well, that same steam is now imprisoned in huge iron boxes, and sent all over the world to carry Her Majesty's mails. You can't believe this? Well, ask Waghorn himself, if you happen to fall in with him; for I understand he paid the monster's wages several times, and will probably remember the circumstance, as he did not obtain the refundment of the money.

Not only does this steam carry our letters, it carries ourselves: at such a rate, too! forty, fifty, sixty—I know not how many miles an hour. This I cannot expect you to credit, but it is true nevertheless; and we get to our journey's end without

fatigue, and want very few inns: on our road we read our "Times" or a shilling novel.

You would indeed like to see our newspaper—how different to the poor "News Letter" and "Flying Post" of our youth! Our present daily paper is as large as a week's issue of those interesting prints, and we are not obliged to fill up by printing a few of David's Psalms at the end; nor do we tell our readers, as an editor of your days once did, that the half-sheet left blank would be very convenient for our subscribers to write their letters upon. Are newspapers admitted into Hades? If so, I will post you one: let me know at your convenience. I am sure, if you be allowed to receive one, you will be astonished.

I said we read our "Times" or a shilling novel: you will think we poor scribes have hard work to get our mutton when a book is sold for a shilling; to say nothing of a pair of lace ruffles and a lawn shirt for Sundays. But we are better off than in your days; for if books be cheap, readers are plentiful. In your time some gentlemen were not ashamed to stumble at a hard word; now every one reads, and writes too, with comparatively rare exceptions; and the very poor have little cheap magazines more cleanly and prettily printed than the "Tattler" or the "Spectator," for which they pay a halfpenny or two, and thus secure rational amusement at a trifling cost.

You must not yet conclude us perfect, nevertheless; we cannot at all agree to teach our poor to be honest, and thus prevent the crime and suffering caused by ignorance. And why not? you will ask. Well, my dear Mr. Addison, spectacles are very fashionable: everybody wears them of some colour, and everybody wants to force his colour on his neighbour. Some of us want the poor wretch to read his commandments through red spectacles, some of us insist on his wearing green, while others have no hope of anybody who refuses to adopt blue. While we quarrel, and by our spitefulness display the orthodoxy

of our Christianity, many a poor waif and stray of humanity gets hopelessly corrupted, and is sent abroad to improve our colonies. You will say this is not much in advance of Queen Anne's days, and indeed I must own it is not.

As for literature, never were the times more promising; your day had the glory of fixing definitively the grammar and orthography of our country, and we look back to the English Augustan age with reverence and respect. There is rather a disposition to mannerism in our present writers, and we should all do well frequently to imbibe large draughts at the sources opened to us in your times; but one cannot but be well pleased with the present complexion of matters. An infidel idea, an impure thought, is scarcely tolerated; the beautiful, genial spirit of Christianity, has purified and vivified our literature, and under such benign influence we may reasonably hope that the Fourth Estate will continue to improve in manner and to rise in aim. As for myself, my dear Mr. Addison, I feel growing terribly old. I have seen many changes and convulsions of society, of which I will tell you when we meet; but none of my varied experiences has, in the smallest degree, altered the regard with which I still subscribe myself,

My dear Mr. Addison,

Your obliged Servant,

A, B, C.

P.S. The men are not half so handsome as when we were young.

ROSA.

BY FRANCIS BENNOCH.

He slept when fever had racked his brain,
  And wildering visions alarmed his soul;
While sleeping, he felt that the holiest strain
  Of melody over his senses stole:
    It calmed his breast, it soothed his brow,
    Its memory haunts him even now.

He dreamt, and a spirit that cheered like wine
  Appeared in the shape of a witching flower;
And from its chalice a hand divine
  Poured odorous dew in a ceaseless shower:
    It cooled his cheek, made glad his heart,
    And he felt new life in his pulses start.

Oh, still he dreamt, and the magical thing
  Assumed the form of a meek-eyed dove;
And the breeze it flung from its fluttering wing
  Was the heavenly breath of sustaining love:
    Through every nerve it quickening ran,
    From a trance like death he awoke a man.

He awoke, and beside his weary bed,
  To smooth his pillow and fan his cheek,
Watched one whose beauty his dreams had fed—
  Whose presence gave strength to a frame so weak
    Unwearying love had saved his life,—
    'T was Rosa, his beautiful, patient wife.

THE EARL'S GALLOWS.

BY ISABELLA MUNRO.

It was towards the close of a summer day, at the latter end of the fourteenth century, that a young Highlander stood on the brow of one of the lofty hills in the neighbourhood of Loch Lomond. His brow was sad and his cheek was pale, and his eye wandered mournfully over the far-spreading scene of lofty mountain, bushy dell, and glancing water, that lay before him, though but rarely before had it met his eye; and the music of the distant waterfall and the hoarse roar of the mountain torrent fell as unheeded on his ear as the wild scream of the eagle passing high above his head, in its homeward flight to the cone-like summit of Ben Lomond.

Yet the thoughts of the young gazer wandered not from the fair scene spread around him, though his heart was filled with bitterness and despondency. The far-stretching valley at his feet, in whose fertile fields the yellow corn was waving, was his birthright; yet much he doubted that he should ever possess it; and in yonder grey tower, seen dimly in the distance, dwelt as heiress one whom in other days, as a simple Highland maiden, he had loved, and who had then returned his love. But times were changed since then; Helen Lindsay's hand was no longer her own to give, and men said the haughty uncle, who on his own son's death had claimed as his heiress the long-neglected

orphan daughter of his sister, destined it for him who had usurped his own inheritance.

And how was he, alone and unaided,—unknown even to the section of the clan who had owned his grandfather for their head,—how was he to win back from the cousin who had usurped them, the lands granted by the Earl of Lennox to that grandfather and to his heirs? This was a question that ever and anon he asked himself with sinking heart, for here upon the spot he felt how almost insurmountable were the obstacles to his enterprise, at the very moment when the Laird of Ardener's resolution to make Helen Lindsay his cousin's bride added a ten-fold pang to his fears of failure.

It had been otherwise in the distant Glengala. There the indomitable spirit of his race urged him, when he heard the slowly-travelled tidings of his grandfather's death, to go at once southward and claim the inheritance that, as the eldest son of Donald Græme, would have been his father's had he lived, though he had suffered exile from his father's roof, and lived and died apart from his clan, rather than wed the heiress the new Laird of Glenlydon had pointed out, and desert the un-dowered bride to whom in humbler days his father had betrothed him. But the younger brother had no conflicting duties, and he readily accepted the bride of his father's choice. He lived not long, and left a son, who for some years past had been in fact, though not in name, Lord of Glenlydon, for the old laird's faculties had long failed him. And since his grandfather's death, some six months since, Stephen Græme, the son of the younger brother, had claimed the heritage as his own, and a stern and exacting master he had shown himself.

While Angus Græme stood thus musing, a sudden move-ment in the forest below attracted his attention, and in a few minutes there issued from it a horseman, whose violent speed and utter disregard of the smoother paths appeared to indicate

that his rider had lost all control over him. On they came towards Angus, mounting rugged rocks, and dashing over chasms so fearful, that, all Highlander as he was, the young man's cheek turned pale to see the stranger's peril. To hurry to his aid was Angus's first impulse, and he moved cautiously, though quickly, down the descent, fearing by the very flutter of his plaid to farther alarm the already terrified or enraged animal.

Angus was still at some distance, when, with the same headlong speed, the horse advanced to the brink of a tremendous chasm. Again the rider made an effort to master him, but in vain; he still dashed forward, and, by a mighty effort, cleared the chasm with his fore-feet: but the hind-feet could not reach the ground, and struggling violently, he uttered that unearthly sound,—a horse's cry of mortal terror,—which was repeated again and again by the surrounding echoes.

At the sight of this last extremity of the horseman Angus sprang forward to seize the bridle, little as he could hope to save him; but ere he gained the spot the poor animal had lost its hold, and uttering another wild cry, fell with his rider into the abyss. Still the young Highlander pressed on, and grasping a branch of alder to steady himself, he bent forward and gazed earnestly into the rocky chasm. But its gloom was so intense that it was some moments ere he could distinguish anything; and when his eye became accustomed to the dimness, there was little to reassure him. Huge rocks piled one upon another, among whose interstices a few shrubs and creeping plants had taken root, formed the sides of the chasm, whose depth was lost in profound darkness, though the impetuous rush of waters told that it concealed a torrent.

But after a time it seemed to Angus that some strange object clung far down to the nearer side of the precipice. He called aloud, and a faint cry reached his ear in return. At once he saw it all: the stranger in falling had grasped at the over-

hanging shrubs, and so escaped sharing the fate of his horse. But he was still in most imminent peril, and Angus knew that he who aided him would not encounter less. But he was a brave and hardy mountaineer, accustomed from his childhood to daring exploits, and it was not in his nature to be deterred by personal danger.

Unwinding, therefore, his plaid, and fastening the end of it round the nearest tree, and using his dirk to aid his steps, he began his descent, at first steadying himself by his plaid, and afterwards by the shrubs and creepers, until at length he stood by the stranger's side; and then after many difficulties and dangers, after ofttimes thinking that their hour was come, and ofttimes again cheering each other on, they stood again in safety on the mountain side.

"I owe to you a life, saved gallantly at the peril of your own," said the stranger, warmly grasping the hand of Angus. "I will not say I wish I could repay it, yet hold me henceforth your grateful debtor."

"Not for this act," said Angus. "I have always believed, to aid another was as much a man's bounden duty as to serve his country or his chief."

"Spoken nobly, and like a Græme!" observed the stranger, glancing at the laurel badge in Angus's bonnet. "But if there should ever be aught within my power, I shall be glad to show that I can never forget this service. And now, farewell," he added, "the day wears apace, and I have no steed to aid my steps. Should you meet any of my late companions in the chase, tell them I go towards the loch."

And waving his hand, the stranger moved rapidly down the mountain side, and was soon lost in the shadows of the pine-trees. Then Angus, all depression banished by exertion, and completely restored to his usual elasticity and energy of mind and body, bounded down from his lofty stand, and within an

hour he was crossing the hills towards Ardener, to linger about the old tower, as he had done each evening since his coming, in the almost vanished hope of seeing her he loved. But scarce had he entered the lands of Ardener, ere, walking along beneath the shadow of the weeping birches that fringed a little rivulet, but with a slow step and subdued mien, that seemed to say greatness had not added to the happiness of the erewhile light-hearted mountain maiden, he now saw Helen Lindsay.

In a moment he was by her side. She uttered a cry of surprise and terror, that quickly changed to an exclamation of welcome, and said earnestly,—

"Oh, Angus, I had feared we were for ever parted!"

"Then you did not wish it, dearest?" said Angus, kissing passionately the hand she had extended to him.

"Wish it? Oh, Angus!" she said reproachfully; "and did you think that change of station could thus change the heart of Helen Lindsay?"

"But they told me you had another lover,—one rich, and young, and noble; a meet suitor for the heiress of Ardener."

"But the heiress of Ardener will never wed him," exclaimed Helen. "She would bear more than Cumming of Ardener or Græme of Glenlydon dare threaten, rather than she would give her hand without her heart, or be false to her plighted troth."

"A thousand thanks for those words, dearest Helen," replied Angus; "yet you deserve a lot far prouder than I can ever offer, though my hopes are higher than they seem;" and he rapidly unfolded to Helen his claims as the heir of Glenlydon.

While thus conversing they walked on, unconsciously following the course of the streamlet as it flowed from Ardener to Glenlydon, and too much occupied with each other to notice what passed around them, until a stern-looking Highlander stepped suddenly into their path, and in a voice full of scorn observed,—

"This, then, is the worthy lover for whose sake Helen of Ardener is ready to dare all things!"

"If in no other way worthy," replied Angus, "so far at least that he would not suffer belted earl or crowned king to speak in that tone to his betrothed bride."

"And who may you be who dare thus to bandy words with Stephen Græme on his own lands?" demanded the new-comer, haughtily.

"His lands!" laughed Angus, scornfully. "Full well you know, that if right prevailed you were not master here."

"And who would be?" demanded Stephen.

"Angus Græme, the head of your house."

"Ah! I've heard of this," said Stephen, quickly. Then he added contemptuously, "And the wooer of my bride, perchance?"

"No, Stephen Græme, not the wooer of your bride," said Helen, who had hitherto remained silent. "Right well you know that Helen Lindsay would never be your bride, though there were no Angus Græme in the world."

"Tush, girl!" said Stephen, rudely; "your Angus Græme is a base-born churl and foul impostor!"

Angus's brow reddened as he heard himself thus designated; but he constrained himself to answer calmly,—

"There is, indeed, an impostor here; but which it is, time will prove."

"Time *will* prove!" cried Stephen, triumphantly; and raising the horn that hung at his side, he blew a blast that echoed far and wide among the hills.

"Fly! fly!" cried Helen, clasping her hands.

"Never!" said Angus, proudly; "I never fled from a foe, and I shall never fly from a Græme."

Another moment, and several Highlanders came running breathlessly up.

"Seize yonder impostor!" cried Stephen passionately, pointing to his cousin.

"I am the son of Murdoch Græme," said Angus, calmly.

The clansmen listened to his words, and they hesitated, for the name of Murdoch Græme was remembered with love among his clan.

"He is an impostor!" cried Stephen. "Ten fat kine to each man who takes him safe to the tower."

The hope of reward vanquished every scruple, and they sprang forward to seize Angus; but he shook off the foremost, saying,—

"It needs not; I will go with you without force, for I have nought to fear from scrutiny. Weep not, Helen, there is no cause for tears," he continued, turning to the young girl, who was weeping bitterly, while Stephen stood by gnashing his teeth with rage at the sight of tears shed for his rival: "weep not, I am among my clansmen, and if I get not justice, at least I shall not suffer injury. Farewell! hasten homeward, and may all the saints protect thee."

And then, kissing the hand of the sorrowing girl, he stood surrounded by his guards, watching till her light form was lost among the trees. Then he turned and walked towards the tower, followed by Stephen, whose features were pale and shrunken with unspeakable rage, while his clear blue eyes glowed like burning coals. The evidences of Helen Lindsay's affection for his cousin had aroused every evil passion of a cruel and revengeful nature. It would have given him a fiendish pleasure to have rushed in upon them and cut short their parting with his dirk, or even to have ordered his captive instantly away; but his followers had stood patiently by, and too well he knew how little love they bore him to risk aught by an imprudent exercise of power.

That evening the rightful heir of Glenlydon passed for the

first time beneath the roof of his fathers, but it was not to sit in the lighted hall surrounded by his clansmen, but to be immured in the deepest dungeon of the tower, as though he had been a traitor or a malefactor. But the young mountaineer cared little for personal hardships; he had, moreover, a conscience void of offence, and a fearless spirit; and he lay down upon the dungeon floor, as he had often done upon the hill-side, and slept soundly until morning.

But there was one some fifty feet above his head slept not so tranquilly, the fires of love and hate burned too fiercely within his bosom not to banish repose, and springing from his couch he paced to and fro in the clear calm moonlight, pondering how he might best defeat the double rival, who had appeared to dispute the inheritance which he well knew was his wrongfully, and to win from him the hand of Helen Lindsay.

The summer's sun had scarcely risen above the hills when Angus Græme was summoned to attend the court, which, by the terms of their charter, the Lairds of Glenlydon were entitled to hold on their domains. At the head of the hall as judge sat Stephen, the dark scowl of hate darkening his brow, and a bitter smile on his lips, as the prisoner entered. Angus returned it with a look of defiance, for well he knew, that with such a judge his case was already decided; and to the charge of being an impostor, he only replied by denying the authority of a court held by an usurper. Then, turning to the assembled clansmen, he commenced an eloquent appeal to them, to at least pause and inquire ere they denied him to be the son of Murdoch Græme; and soon stern brows began to unbend, and looks were cast on the young orator, while here and there a murmur of assent ran through the assembly.

But these manifestations of good-will were quickly stopped by Stephen Græme, and those to whom he had shown favour. Then, declaring that the prisoner's words before the court had

sufficiently proved his offence, they pronounced him guilty, and sentenced him to be hung, ere the morrow's noon, on the Earl of Lennox's gallows at Catter.

There was a loud murmur of surprise, but the lurid light shone out from Stephen's eye, and he had long since taught his followers, that those who thwarted him gained evermore a bitter enemy. Moreover, human life was not valued then as, happily, it is now; so the Græmes opposed no longer the will of their chieftain regarding one who, for aught they knew, might really be the impostor he declared him.

That evening Angus watched the last rays of the sun that stole through the chink of his prison, as those do who know that his next coming will see them die. Not that he feared death; he had too often risked life among the wild crags of his native hills—he had been too ready, had it been needful, to lay it down for his God, his country, or his king, to dread losing it now. But it was different to look forward to an ignominious death at the hands of his nearest kinsman, to resign all the bright visions youth forms of life, and more painful still to leave the fair being he had so long and so truly loved, exposed to the renewed suit of his own murderer. It was this thought lent the coming hour its greatest sting, and long he pondered whether his fate could not be evaded. But alone in the midst of numbers, without a single friend to aid him, he felt it was impossible, and with that resignation to the Inevitable which forms part of our nature, in the silence of night he prepared himself to die. One thing he would have wished, to have taken a last farewell of Helen Lindsay, whose love had partly caused his fate; but it might not be, he could only breathe for her happiness the most fervent prayers and wishes.

And yet, sadder than his own, was the heart of Helen Lindsay, as she sat in the old tower of Ardener, feeling fear close denser round her heart every moment with the increasing darkness.

She knew the fierce nature of Stephen Græme too well not to dread his wreaking his vengeance on the kinsman and rival thus thrown into his power; and she had despatched a faithful messenger, that morning to Glenlydon, to learn what was going on. Yet, gloomy as were her forebodings, they had not prepared her for the tidings which, at last, he brought—that Angus was to die to-morrow; he who but yesterday had stood beside her, and clasped her hand: it seemed at first as if that thought would bury her helpless beneath the full tide of despairing grief. But then the remembrance came over her that she, Angus's only friend in that strange district, must not sit idly down to weep for his death while yet he lived.

Then at once she set herself to think what could be done. Nothing that night, said the faithful clansman, whom alone she dared to take into her confidence. In the morning she might essay her project of seeking the Earl of Lennox, and beseeching his interference and protection for the young Græme; but this night was dark and clouded, and the rain beat, and the wind howled through the glens, and it was no time for a maiden like her to stir abroad. So she had to yield. Oh, what would she not have given for the calm skies and bright moonlight of the past night, that she might have set forth at once to plead her lover's cause!

The storm passed with the night, and ere the morning rays had brightened the loftiest pinnacle of Ben Lomond, Helen Lindsay and her trusty servitor were on their way to Loch Lomond, or, as it was in those days called, Loch Leven. The road was a long and toilsome one for the girl, but the thought of her lover's peril, and that on her efforts, perhaps, his life depended, gave her energy to struggle against weariness, and walk on as resolutely as the sturdy Highlander that accompanied her.

The lake-shore was reached at length, and Helen began to

think that fortune smiled upon her journey, for a skiff was quickly obtained to bear them over the bright waters, and ere she could step into it she was greeted by her father's brother, who had been on his way to Ardener to visit her. A few words explained her errand, and he at once promised to accompany her; and well pleased was the young girl to secure his support of her petition. Urged forward by Helen's liberal gift to the boatman, the light skiff sped swiftly across Loch Lomond to the large island of Inch-Murrin, whereon stood the stately residence of the Earl of Lennox. Far away they saw another boat, sailing towards the mouth of the Endrick, but thought not of it, until on reaching the Inch-Murrin they learned that the Earl had departed to pass the day at his castle at Catter.

At Catter, where Angus was that day to die! There was nought for them but to follow on the track of Lennox, and loosing their own white sail to the breeze, they steered also to the Endrick. Before they landed on the river's bank, the Earl and his party were out of sight. They hurried on, and soon beheld the fatal mound where Angus was doomed to die. A crowd was already gathered on it—a chill struck to Helen's heart; she felt she *must* be too late, and yet she hurried on.

It was yet early morning when they had brought forth Angus Græme from his prison, for Glenlydon was many miles from Catter. The sun was shining in the clear blue sky, glancing on the rain-drops that gemmed tree and heather, flashing on the rocky summits of the mountains, and on the silvery torrents that rushed down their sides. Angus turned on all an earnest eye; it was, he felt, his last look at his magnificent fatherland, his last farewell to the world which he was leaving. At length his glance fell on Ardener, and his cheek paled, and his lip quivered, and the composure he had all along maintained well-nigh deserted him. The next moment a harsh voice whispered in his ear,—

"What message shall I bear to Helen Lindsay?"

"None!" was the stern reply; "I would not that one so innocent should listen to the voice of a false Scot and a murderer!"

Stephen Græme shrunk back abashed, and came not again near his prisoner untill they reached the Moot-Hill of Catter, an artificial mound of earth, where stood the earl's gallows, on which Glenlydon, as well as other vassals of the Lennox, were obliged, by the terms of their charter, to hang all persons condemned to death in their court.

But Stephen's anxiety to rid himself of so hated a rival had brought them there too soon, and now they had to await the coming of the Earl, or his subordinate, to whom intelligence of the intended execution had been sent on the previous evening; and in the meantime they occupied themselves in preparing all things, even to placing the rope round the prisoner's neck. At length the Earl was seen approaching; and so wild a gleam of joy shot out from Stephen's eye at the sight, that it aroused all the fierce spirit of his fathers in Angus's heart. But he turned away; he wished not to die thus, and go with a soul filled with wrath to supplicate eternal forgiveness.

Then followed the rapid sound of horses' footfalls, and the loud tones of many voices, and Angus knew that the mighty Earl of Lennox was beside him; but he turned not his head, the world and its honours were nothing then to him. Suddenly a stranger stood before him—it was the person whose life he had saved but two days back. The stranger started with surprise at sight of the prisoner, and waving his hand to those who stood around, he cried,

"Loose him! loose him! On the word of a belted earl, whatever he hath done he shall go free!"

"But, my lord, my lord," stammered Stephen, in perfect agony as he saw his cousin released in obedience to the orders of

his powerful superior, "but, my lord, he is an impostor, who claims my inheritance and my bride."

"Ha—ha—ha!" loudly and scornfully laughed the Earl. "'Tis a new way to rid ourselves of those who eclipse us in bright eyes. But not for this shall he hang, nor yet for claiming the lands of Glenlydon. He, who so gallantly saved the life of Lennox, could have better for the asking. How is it, my friend," he continued, addressing Angus, who was now at liberty, "how is it that in this extremity you asked not my promised aid? though, God wot, I little thought how soon it would be needed."

"I guessed not your name or rank, my lord," replied Angus. "As to lands, I want none but my birthright, as the son of Donald Græme's eldest son."

"He deceives you, my lord; there is no such person," cried Stephen, whose countenance was again pale and shrunken with rage.

Angus's eye flashed, but ere he could reply there was a stir among the surrounding Highlanders, and a woman's voice exclaimed anxiously,—

"Are we in time? Is he yet safe?"

A moment after Helen Lindsay appeared, and rushing up to the Earl of Lennox she threw herself on her knees before him, exclaiming,—

"Save him, my lord; he is not guilty!"

"He is safe, fair lady," said the Earl, and taking her hand he attempted to raise her; but the sudden change of feeling was too great, and she sunk back fainting in Angus's arms, while Stephen stood by with writhing lips and his hand upon his dirk. But the Earl's eye was upon him, and he was forced to restrain himself.

"And can you bring any proofs to show that you are the son of Murdoch Græme?" demanded the Earl, of Angus.

"Many, but they are not here present," replied Angus.

"Yes, here is one present," said a strange voice, and one who had hitherto stood in the background came forward.

"What, David Lindsay, my old companion in arms, is this you?" exclaimed the Earl.

"Yes, my lord, it is I," replied the uncle of Helen Lindsay. "And for many a year I knew Murdoch Græme in Glengala, and well do I know this lad to be his son."

"And well do I know you, David," said the Earl, "that not for a king's crown would you say that which was false. And now," he continued, turning to the assembled Græmes and pointing to Angus, "behold your chieftain: be to him as you have been to others, good and true, and I doubt not the sun of Glenlydon will shine brighter than ever."

A loud shout of welcome burst from the Græmes. The selfish heart and narrow spirit of Stephen were not calculated to win the love of his Highland followers, who only bore with him from respect for his name and lineage, and sincere, therefore, was the welcome they extended to their new lord, whose noble demeanour had already won their hearts. Yet their joy was not unmixed, for in many a heart were sore misgivings how he might resent their participation in the last act of Stephen Græme.

"And now for the impostor," cried the Earl. "Highland justice says, that the same injury a man has inflicted upon another shall be his punishment. Stephen Græme would have hung his kinsman and lawful chief, therefore I say he is worthy of death, and shall take his cousin's place upon the gallows;" and calling to his own attendants, for the Græmes held back, he added, "Hang him up! hang him up! he called us to a hanging, and it is high time the play began;" and with the fearful disregard of human life common to the age in which he lived, the Earl of Lennox laughed long and heartily at his own jest.

Another moment and Angus advanced, and pleaded earnestly and humbly for his cousin's life.

"How!" exclaimed the Earl, in astonishment; "have you already forgotten, that not an hour since he placed the hangman's rope round your own neck?"

Angus had not forgotten, but he had no wish for revenge; he felt the death even of this bitter foe would afford him no pleasure: on the contrary, it would dim his joy in gaining his birthright, and shadow the happiness of his union with her he loved, to feel they had been sealed with blood.

"Well, if you whom he has thus deeply wronged can forgive him," continued the Earl, "it would ill become me to be more stern. Take, then, the worthless life you crave, and do with him as you will: I only hope you may never have cause to repent this day."

"I want nought of him," said Angus, "save that he goes to his mother's lands, and troubles me and Glenlydon no more."

Two months after there was a marriage at Ardener, for both niece and uncle approved the new Laird of Glenlydon. It was a stately bridal; the Earl of Lennox graced it with his presence, and every chieftain and laird for many a mile round was there, save one, and with him no good man held communion, no proud man fellowship, since the day he sought to extinguish on the earl's gallows at Catter his cousin's claims to the lands of Glenlydon and the hand of Helen Lindsay. At length, finding himself universally shunned, he crossed to France and there died, leaving his lands to the cousin who had dealt so generously by him.

STANZAS.

BY A. E. PONSONBY.

STARS! by the light of whose ardent eyes
I have dreamed my happiest dreams!
Never again shall I see ye rise
O'er the foam of our mountain streams.
Brief is the span of a summer's night,
Soon in the east shall the dawn be light;
But never again, from this spot of earth,
Shall I watch the fair morn in her golden birth.

And thou, my beloved! on the tears of whose sorrow
The cold dews are falling, the cold beams do shine,
How drear the long night, and how dull the to-morrow,
That follow the day of such worship as mine!
Too dear hast thou been—but in absence more dear;
My soul's full emotion shall wait on thee here!
To my fate I must yield; to my duty I bow;
But all that I *can*, on my love I bestow.

And all that I can, it is but to turn sadly,
With the grief of a spirit too proud to forget,
From the dawn, whose vain promise I welcomed so gladly,
To the night that endures for me yet.
But thou, be thou happy! I ask thee to share
My tender remembrance—but not my despair;
Be blest in the future—yet, think of the past,
As a fair fleeting vision too precious to last!

HOME.

BY MRS. W. H. COATES (LATE ELIZABETH YOUATT).

I LOVE to visit foreign climes,
To stand on classic ground,
Where the spirit of the glorious Past
Seems brooding all around;
To bend above the hallow'd shrine
Where great and good men rest:
But wheresoe'er I go, I love
The coming Home the best!

I love to roam the woodlands bright,
By lake and waterfall;
Or stand beside the mighty waves
And listen to their call.
How beautiful such wanderings!
What rapture fills the breast!
But wheresoe'er I go, I love
The coming Home the best!

Oh, Italy is a fairy land!
With her palaces and towers!
And well I love her deep blue skies,
And merry sunset hours.
But my home-sick thoughts turn fondly,
Like wild birds to their nest;
And wheresoe'er I go, I love
The coming Home the best!

THE SISTERS OF SEVILLE.

BY M. A. POWER.

In Seville there once resided—no matter when, that has nothing to do with the interest of the story—two sisters, who were, of course, two of the most beautiful maidens of the city, otherwise they would not assuredly have been the heroines of my tale.

Not only, however, were they beautiful, but they were of most ancient lineage, rich, accomplished, amiable—everything that young maidens always ought to be, and so seldom are, more's the pity; though, if the remark did not apply to the rest of the world as much as it does to them—often more, poor things!—I think there are many people who would have less cause to complain.

Theresia and Anita were the names of my Sevillian beauties. Theresia was the elder; she was tall and of a fine figure, with regular features, and had the rich, dark, warm colouring, supposed to appertain to all of her nation. She was staid and sensible, of a quiet, pensive turn; and her gentle gravity, far more than her superiority in years—for there were but three between the sisters—gave her over Anita an authority and an influence which almost supplied those of the mother they had lost in their childhood. Anita's beauty was of a character more likely to attract than that of her sister. Much fairer, with a colour that

came and went at every change of feeling; dark eyes, that varied in expression at each moment; a shy, wild, sensitive nature, that sought to repress and conceal its ardent thoughts and earnest sensations, shrinking with an undefined timidity from exposing itself, even to those it loved best, and would, had it dared, have trusted most, and then, when the effort was too great, giving way to bursts of feeling, astonishing—almost inexplicable—to those around.

Confiding in the virtues and docility of his daughters, and in the strong good sense and early thoughtfulness of Theresia, Don Luis da Ciebra left them much to their own guidance and direction. No cross and capricious duenna was suffered to interfere with their useful occupations or innocent amusements. All the means and appliances of wealth were placed at their disposal; their rooms were furnished and decorated as their taste dictated; a fine house, a park-like garden, a carriage, books, works, music, flowers, a moderate indulgence in the pleasures of society, furnished ample food for enjoyment.

An important post occupied by their father left him but little leisure to enjoy the society of his daughters during the day, but their evenings were almost always spent in each other's company, either alone, among guests to whom Theresia, principally, did the honours with grace and dignity, or at the houses of the friends they visited.

As may be supposed, suitors were not wanting for our fair sisters, but as yet none had presented themselves who met with sufficient favour in the eyes of the damsels or of Don Luis to encourage them to believe that their pretensions were likely to be accepted.

The handsome Castilian, the Conde Alonzo de Ribera, had, perhaps, elicited a shy smile and a blush or two from Anita; but then Anita was always smiling or blushing, and the Conde had the reputation—and deserved it—of being a *mauvais sujet;* and

a story went about of his having won and broken the heart of a noble damsel in Castile, which, it was said, was the cause of his leaving his native province: and this was quite sufficient to frighten away any little Cupids that might have been fluttering about the heart of Anita, with the project of building their nest there.

Theresia, too, was supposed at one time to have lent more serious attention than was her wont to the conversation of Don Pedro de Almaña; but then he had travelled much, and had such interesting tales to tell of his voyages, that they amused her, and when he turned the subject to a more exclusively personal theme she found him less agreeable: and he, in despair, went off to travel again: no doubt to gather fresh materials for her divertissement. So time went by, and the sisters remained happy and tranquil in their beloved home, without a thought or a wish to leave it. It was not natural, however, that this state of things should last for ever; that two young maidens, with everything to inspire love, and doubtless capable of feeling it, should fade into ancient spinsterhood, unloving and unloved. You have unquestionably divined, dear reader, that I had something more interesting than this to relate to you concerning them: I have, it is true, or I had better not have undertaken this chronicle.

One evening, when Don Luis was to entertain a small number of favourite guests, he announced to his daughters that he had that day received a visit from two young men, one of whom, a compatriot, Don Guzman de Villarcia, was a distant kinsman of his, well known to him by his high repute for honour, talent, and integrity, though they were not previously acquainted, this being the young man's first visit to Seville; the other an Englishman, named Vane, his intimate friend and travelling companion.

He had invited them, Don Luis added, to come in the

evening, and particularly recommended them to the attention and hospitable cares of his daughters,—the one as a kinsman and honoured guest; the other as a stranger and his friend, of whom he spoke in terms of the warmest regard, esteem, and affection.

With the other *invités*, the young men failed not to present themselves; each was an excellent specimen of his nation. Don Guzman, dark, handsome, distinguished alike in appearance and manner, had more vivacity than his countrymen usually exhibit. Vane, tall, slight, fair, with that peculiar air of easy, unaffected distinction, which particularly appertains to a thoroughly well-bred Englishman of the upper-class of society, and which was in nowise impaired by a certain shyness, wholly apart from *mauvaise honte*, and springing from a sensitive nature, and the consciousness of being surrounded by strangers, whose habits and manner he was little acquainted with, though tolerably well versed in their language from having carefully studied it, and being the intimate friend of Don Guzman, with whom he had travelled on the Continent, and who had been for some time his father's guest in England. Such visitors were likely to render the recommendation of Don Luis not very irksome to obey. The young Englishman found he could speak Spanish with Theresia, nearly as fluently as his native tongue; and Anita blushed, and smiled oftener at the discourse of Don Guzman in one hour than she had done all the time the Conde Alonzo de Ribera had laid siege to her heart.

The familiarity of intercourse that exists in Spain between young men and women, so favoured the developement of the acquaintance thus begun, that in a very short time a considerable degree of intimacy was established among three members of the little circle; but Vane, though he never failed to accompany his friend in his visits to the house of Don Luis,

and willingly embraced every occasion to be in the society of the fair sisters, could not so readily adopt the terms on which the Spaniard, almost from the first, had placed himself; and Theresia, who in the beginning had seemed so kindly disposed towards him, gradually drew back, and assumed a coldness and reserve different to her usual easy and gentle bearing. This, of course, increased the distance between them, which there seemed but little chance of being removed. Vane, who had at first expressed an intention of remaining a considerable time at Seville, now talked of returning to England, and even spoke frequently of his preparations, and alluded to the period of his departure; but the preparations seemed to make little progress, and the period passed and Vane was not gone, but still, as before, only talking of going.

Meanwhile, how were the thoughts or hearts of the sisters occupied? It would be difficult to say. A certain reserve, of which each was fully though silently conscious, seemed to have gradually grown up between them. Though so constantly in the society of the two young men, they rarely, when alone together, mentioned their names, and never held anything like a conversation concerning them.

Theresia's gentle seriousness became a pensiveness approaching to melancholy, which she sought as much as possible to conceal; while Anita's usually shy, impressionable nature, seemed to grow more than ever nervously susceptible.

Nothing of the tender affection which from their infancy had united them was diminished, but each felt she had a secret from her sister—her sister a concealment from her—a point of interest too delicate for either to dare to touch upon; that while bestowing on each other, if possible, stronger marks of attachment and tenderness, they mutually shrunk from any approach to an explanation of the state of their feelings.

Matters were in this position when, one day, as Anita was

completing her toilette for a *réunion*, to take place that evening at their home, her sister entered her room, looking agitated and uneasy. There was so much of perturbation in her air and manner, that, in spite of the reserve which existed between them, Anita could not see her thus disturbed without inquiring the cause; and, throwing her arms round her sister's neck, she entreated her to reveal the secret of her anxiety. In vain Theresia sought to avoid an explanation,—in vain pleaded a thousand trivial excuses for her agitation; the tender solicitude of Anita once awakened, it was impossible longer to avoid an explanation, and with a flushed cheek and trembling voice Theresia revealed her secret.

That afternoon Don Guzman had arrived alone, making some excuse for the absence of his friend. Anita having left the room for a moment, he had hastily handed Theresia a sealed missive, saying, "Read that when you are alone, and give me the answer this evening." The return of Anita had prevented further explanation. The visitor remained till the sisters went to dress for the evening, and it was only when Theresia retired to her room for that purpose that she had an opportunity of perusing the letter, which she now produced;—it was a declaration of attachment, expressed in the most earnest and passionate terms, and concluding with the assurance that, if she refused to bestow her hand on the writer, or at least to afford him a gleam of hope for the future, he would quit Seville on the following day,—condemned by her cruelty to a life of exile from the only spot where he could have found happiness on earth.

For a moment Anita seemed stunned by the revelation; then, bursting into a passion of tears, she threw herself on a seat, and covering her face with her hands, wept and sobbed in a paroxysm of uncontrollable grief.

"Alas, alas! I feared it would be thus!" exclaimed Theresia. "Darling child! why would you insist on pene-

trating a secret I would fain have kept from you?" and mingling her tears with those of her sister, Theresia seemed as deeply affected to have gained a lover, as Anita at finding she had lost what she had fondly hoped to be one.

But time wore on; the guests were arriving, and at a summons from their father, surprised at their non-appearance, the sisters were compelled to control their feelings, and with heavy heads and aching hearts to descend to the saloon. Among the visitors assembled, the first that came forward to greet them was Don Guzman de Villarcia. An expression of tender anxiety at sight of their swollen eyes and agitated countenances instantly overspread his handsome face. Earnestly he watched them, till the duty of receiving their guests had been painfully gone through; then, seizing the first opportunity that left Anita free, he approached her, and, taking her hand, entreated her to take a turn with him in the garden.

Fain would the poor child have refused, but her trembling lips failed to form a reply; and drawing her arm through his, he led her unwillingly forth through the open window by which they were standing.

"Anita," he exclaimed, as soon as they were alone, "what is the cause of this, dearest? You must know, you must have seen, how deep, how tender, is the interest with which you inspire me! You must be aware of how closely everything that concerns you for good or ill must touch me! Tell me, Anita, best beloved! what is the cause of these tears, of this evident suffering, which seems no less to have affected Theresia than yourself? Confide in me, let me feel that my solicitude is not distasteful to you! Nay, do not shrink from me! Anita, is it possible? I hoped, I trusted from your manner, from the expression of those dear eyes, that it would not be thus you would receive the

declaration of my affection! One word, Anita, to explain this dreadful, this cruel mystery!"

"Traitor!" burst from the lips of the indignant girl, "what means this double perfidy? what end do you propose in playing a game as mad as it is wicked? Theresia! your letter to her in the morning, and now this declaration to me to-night! Have you lost your senses?"

"Theresia!" exclaimed Guzman, with a bewildered air. "*My* letter to Theresia? I never wrote that letter! It was Vane—Vane! who, dreading from the coldness of her manner to express his passion for her in person, yet resolved to know his fate, whatever it might be, entreated me to convey that letter to her, and to receive her reply to-night. Dearest child! what could have made you or your sister imagine that *I* was the author of it—addressed to her instead of to you?"

"The fact of your giving it, and its being in the purest Spanish; which it could not have been, written by Mr. Vane."

"And the signature?" interrupted Guzman.

"G. V., your initials."

"And his, also!" replied the triumphant lover, "George Vane! As to the Spanish," he added, smiling, "as he wished, at all events, not to appear ridiculous in the eyes of his lady-love, he asked me, who had been his confident throughout, to correct his phraseology; and there lies the secret of his sudden proficiency in our tongue. And now, sweet Anita," he concluded, once more drawing an arm which no longer resisted through his own, and holding a willing prisoner the little hand appended thereto, "will you still call me a traitor, and make those dear eyes flash upon me with such indignant scorn?"

The glance by which they replied was a sufficient answer.

And Vane? did he leave Seville within the twenty-four

hours, heart-broken, and raving against the cruelty of women in general, and Spanish women in particular, and Theresia beyond all other women, Spanish or otherwise? No such thing! Theresia's coldness, assumed in the belief that his shyness was indifference, and in order to conceal a growing sentiment of preference for him, melted as rapidly as Anita's at the explanation speedily conveyed to her, and the wedding of the two sisters took place on the same day.

FLOWER-CHAINS.

BY MRS. ABDY.

"When wreathing with these rude hands flower-chains for thy neck, I said, 'The flowers fade, but the chain lasts when Love weaves it.'"—*Harold*, by Sir E. Bulwer Lytton.

Fair Maiden, while wreathing
  These flower-chains for thee,
The blossoms seem breathing
  Sweet fancies to me;
While closely I twine them,
  I fondly expect
That thou wilt not consign them
  To reckless neglect.

The flowers, ere they wither,
  This message shall bear:—
"Love knit us together
  With diligent care:
These chains of rude fashion
  A tale may impart,
Of fond, earnest passion,
  Warm—warm from the heart!"

Go, flowers, on your duty,
  My mission fulfil!
In dim, fading beauty,
  Be eloquent still!
And speak, while exhaling
  Your last fragrant breath,
Of true love prevailing
  O'er change and o'er death!

HYMN TO THE CLASSIC RHONE.

BY NICHOLAS MICHELL.

No more a hundred temples gleam
  Along thy banks, bright arrowy Rhône!
The Cæsar's pomp is but a dream;
  The Goth and Vandal long have flown:
No more the notes of lyre and flute
  Sound from the Pagan's pillar'd shrine;
The Dryad's prophet-oak is mute,
  The Nymphs no more their garlands twine:
The Fawn hath died upon his hill,
The Naiad by her silver rill.

Time, with his mighty scythe, has passed,
  And mown into the eternal tomb
Empires and creeds. Oh! what shall last?
  What triumph o'er the general doom?
We gaze along thy crystal river;
  It rolls as free, and pure, and bright,
As when the Gaul, with bow and quiver,
  Quailed to the Roman Eagle's might;
And flowers blush out, and woods are green,—
Nature, undimmed, no change hath seen.

Oh! no; along the earth, the air,
From mountain-peak to moss-clad vale,
Undying youth smiles everywhere,
Paints the blue sky, and scents the gale.
Then mourn not, man, but snatch a bliss
From each fair scene that glows around thee;
Let Hope the Future's bright brow kiss,
Nor think an evil doom hath bound thee!
Bless Heaven's decrees, and pluck the flowers,
And give to joy the laughing hours.

The sun goes down o'er hill and dell,
Home to her hive the bee is winging;
The lily shuts her fragrant bell,
And her last song the thrush is singing;
Each tiny wave is crisped with gold;
All things are steeped in peace and bliss;
Sure gleams of Eden we behold
In scene so beauteous, charmed as this;
And dull is he whose eye would close,
Whose loveless heart no rapture knows.

But eve steals on, the vestal moon
Comes forth in yon deep blue to pray,
And other star-nuns 'round her soon
Gathering adore in bright array.
Thou, classic Rhône! shalt murmur too
Thy wave-born hymn so softly sweet,
And gentle maids, while evening's dew
They break to gems with gem-like feet,
And in thy tide trace heaven above,
Shall charm thy banks with songs of love.

THE LOST HEART.

BY WILLIAM WILSON, AUTHOR OF "A LITTLE EARNEST BOOK ON A GREAT OLD SUBJECT," ETC. ETC.

THE PAST.

PART I.

I REMEMBER, I one evening
From my study-window leant;
One soft evening, when the twilight
With my saddened feelings blent.
And as I gazèd through the air,
Across my English garden neat,
There came upon my tunèd sense
A melody surpassing sweet.
My loneliness it *made* me feel,
It thrilled me strangely through and through!
Short time from then, the fairy hand
That made that music well I knew!
But sadly I recall the time,
When, looking dreamily around,
I first beheld *her!* wandering slowly,
Wrapped in seeming thought profound,
Amidst the avenue that fixed
Her father's pretty garden bound.

II.

Ah, me! that I had never seen her,
  Walking all so sweetly there;
Ah, me! that I had never seen
  Her soft and summer-lifted hair.
The brilliancy, so quiet and dreamy,
  Of her large and earnest eyes,
Will haunt me ever, ever haunt me,
  This side of the distant skies!
Such love-light played about their glance,
  As draws the very soul along:
A book they were, with meanings clear,
  Through which the sweetest thoughts would throng.
I remember, when in time
  I came to love and know her well,
How with all the highest thoughts
  Of Pride, and Hope, my heart would swell;
And how it filled my nights with pleasure,
  On her gentle love to dwell.

III.

I remember her delight
  Of Music, and its power to talk,
While tremblingly I slid my arm
  Around her waist in some green walk;
And I remember that one evening
  Eloquent her tongue did grow
About old well-remembered tunes
  That gentle hearts should love to know;
And all the time the tell-tale blood
  Was babbling love upon her cheek;—
Then, something after this effect
  Did her poetic spirit speak:—

OLD TUNES.

"Old well-remembered tunes aye float
  Like tender souls about the earth,
And from their soothing melody
  What gentle pictures have their birth.
They steal upon their mental vision,
  Quieting each jarring nerve,
Bringing holy peace unto us,
  Holy purposes to serve.
Then, through all the magic mazes
  Of the Past the heart can wander—
The pleasant melancholy Past,
  That softened souls all love to ponder.
Reopened are the closèd gates
  Of many an ancient feeling;
Old loves and friendships of 'lang syne,'
  From Memory's storehouse stealing.
Old tunes! they tap against the heart,
  And find admission; there to rest
Like some poor bird, all weary-winged,
  That once again hath found its nest.
For Music sure, to care and sorrow
  Both, can bring a sweet repose.
The best of words to such old tunes
  Would spoil their language, Heaven knows!
Old tunes are twined about the heart
  To keep its memory ever green:
In any heart unmovèd by them,
  Little good has ever been;
In any nature touched not by them,
  Greatness never yet was seen."

I loved the music of her voice,
  As pleasantly life sauntered on;
A path of light we seemed to tread.
  There fell a shadow—she was gone!
A heavy darkness crossed our path,
  And I was in the World—alone!

THE FUTURE HOPE.

PART II.

IV.

'T is sad for spirits much enhungered,
  Ne'er to taste their longed-for love!
Condemned, when young in heart and days,
  Along life's paths alone to move.
'T is sad to see life's tide go out,
  And bear upon it all you prize,
And helpless stand upon the shore,
  And gaze with agonisèd eyes.
'T is sad to know one fair and young,
  In whom is centred all your hope,
Within the grasp of unseen arms,
  With whom no mortal power can cope.
Most human woes that we can trace,
  Are found to have a human cause!
But when young blossoms from Life's tree,
  With o'er-ripe age, bear Nature's clause,
Then baffled Reason only can
  Upon life's weary mystery pause.

V.

Dear Soul! when I look back upon
  The garnered May-time of my life,
I think of that young love of mine—
  Of her that should have been my wife.
I think of that first tune I heard,
  And of our evening converse, too;
Then, oh! the long lone gap in life
  That darkly stretches on my view!
Young ebbed the current of her being
  From off life's strand—where linger I!
She was too good for earth and me—
  She dwelleth in the glorious sky!
Oh, God! what weary, restless years,
  Are those devoid of human love,
When, through the heart's deserted chambers,
  Memories like phantoms rove:
But it is part of my firm Faith,
  That loving souls shall meet above.

VI.

Yes, she was right; that old tunes will
  The pictures of the Past repaint,
New light and shade to subjects giving,
  That have long grown dim and faint.
At sound of that old tune of ours,
  At any time relives again
The Avenue we loved to rove in,
  In her father's small domain;
A nest her rich heart was to me,
  Love-linèd, where I hoped to live.
Since first I stood by her quiet grave,
  I 've ceased against the world to strive.

I once had hoped to win a name,
So long as she was smiling by;
But all my sunshine on the earth,
With her dear life appeared to die:
Yet, through my darkness, like a beacon,
Shines the hope to meet on high.

VII.

The dear old pleasant twilight time
Is still the time I love the best;
It is so calm, that I can think
With some degree of spirit-rest.
Then, my old peace of mind, which went
With her into the quiet tomb,
In the distance of a Future,
Seems upon my sense to loom.
In the mellow Summer twilight,
When the garish day 's at rest,
Then my spirit seems to commune
With *that* spirit — early blest!
Then I seem to gain conviction,
Of reward for Sorrow here,
And such thoughts of Perfect Love,
Belonging to a higher sphere,
That I long to reach his realms —
Where dwell not Sorrow, Doubt, or Fear.

THE MAGIC CRYSTAL;

OR,

THREE HOURS ON THE DIAL OF A RHAPSODIST.

BY MRS. OCTAVIUS FREIRE OWEN.

"This is to be a mortal,
And seek the things beyond mortality.
* * * * *
The glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?"—BYRON.

PROLOGUE.

IN the mystic cave of the Ideal, by the rushing waters of Time, I lay and slumbered, and Inspiration unlocked the golden gates of Thought, and there passed before me a shape, which raised its veil studded with a thousand filmy spots,—men's hopes and fears,—coloured cameleon-like, not of themselves, but from the aspect of those who gaze upon them; and I knew that I stood face to face with the dim and shadowy Future. Myriads of spirits surrounded me, yet invisible; their forms, like the gossamer, floating transparent and intangible; indistinct chimeræ, which to look at was to lose, melting away into the translucent air as the baffled vision vainly sought to define their flashing shape, and chanting as they wafted past a wild melody, now clear, now borne in fitful gushes upon the ear with sudden swell,

again as suddenly breathed away in dying cadences, till one potentate alone reigned in that cold vault,—Death's brother—Silence!

Yet still methought, ever the shape looked at me through the gloom with its pervading eyes, like wells of mystery unfathomable, smiling, but with a sorrowful and chastened smile, as it wafted its low wailing voice in echoes through the arched and hollow cells:—

"Child of Earth! whose mind wars with the mortal thraldom of its present fate, and spurning the fetters of the flesh flings its rich thoughts, like blazing meteors, into the dim abyss of Nature's mysterious and forbidden knowledge, what wouldst thou with the Future? Pause, ere it be too late; since, if compelled through thy secret wish (for spirits need no ministry of words, no gross elemental interpreter between the immaterial communication of intellect), and by a fiat higher than my own, I unveil the mirror of Time to come, thou canst not erase the plague-spot of this knowledge from thy being afterwards. Like the poisoned vest of thy fabled Nessus, it will fasten its fatal folds around the fibres of thy being, and stifle the struggles even of the demigod, in the poisonous entanglements of its own creation! Unhappy! thou preferrest, then, Remorse to Repentance? Alas! thou must have thy wish—I obey—behold!"

The dark clouds rolled onwards rapidly. I turned and looked, and, lo! before me lay stretched a calm expanse, as though of glass, over whose surface shapes, insect-like, passed silently, which I recognised, as mine eyes grew clearer, to be mortal forms,—men, women, children; and I could hear distant notes of mirth and passion, of love, laughter, mockery, and woe, blended in wild confusion: but the sound of the last absorbed the others into itself, as an ocean drinks up rivers! The employments also of these shapes, though individually varied and infinitely diverse, were of marvellous similitude collectively;

for all were toiling after gold, which, fast as they amassed, even the most covetous, threw wildly into the lap of a horrible monster with a hundred faces — their idol, Appetite!

Moreover, although the countenances of these myriad shapes were multiform, yet the material mechanism of their being, and the causes from which they died, were alike in all; for each carried within his breast a clock, or heart, whose pendulum, Life, swung between Mind and Matter; and when Mind swayed the movement too hardly, Matter could resist it but feebly; and when Matter propelled it violently, Mind grew paralysed, until, even in the strongest, the struggles between these two wore out the clock, and the pendulum at last stood still! And the mask was off fictitious life, and I saw things as they were and are; how Flattery fawned upon Wealth, and Treachery dodged the heels of Ambition, and Tyranny lorded it over Justice, and Insensibility claimed the honour of Fortitude, and Vice kept Hypocrisy his attendant always at high wages, and Honesty and Truth appeared, like two old men, universally shunned, so that even Poverty would not associate with them; and already I repented of my wish, as I gazed with wonder-stricken eyes: yet, urged onwards by some irresistible destiny, I sought still further, and cried in desperate accents, "Give me! oh, give me yet to see the spectacle of my future years!"

Hour the First.

The streets of London are dim and cheerless, the lamps emitting a dreary uncomfortable radiance, "shorn of their beams," and seeming half inclined to make common cause with the fog, "which pales their ineffectual fires," by going out altogether. And now a drizzling rain comes on unostentatiously, but with steady decision of meaning, sufficient to soak the most carefully-wrapped-up passenger to the skin in a few minutes.

The smaller thoroughfares are almost deserted; even the lazy

frequenters of colloquial corners, the squalid loiterers on door-steps, have forsaken their stands, to take shelter in their dens, awed by the threatening aspect of the night.

A solitary traveller folds his heavy cloak still more closely across his breast, and journeys on rapidly, but abstracted; the wind rises, and the drops of the increasing storm beat in his face; breaking at last even through his musing, and disturbing its gloomy reverie. He stops, and looks round for a cab; but none appearing in sight, once more his footstep falls with muffled sound upon the damp pavement.

Stop! wheels in the distance! Turning down the quiet street, and dashing through the pools with noisy haste, a vehicle approaches. The fog prevents his detecting of what character it is, until close beside him; but with the hope of finding shelter, almost belied by the hurry at which it moves, the traveller rests beside the kerbstone.

The carriage, however, is a private one, drawn by a pair of spirited greys, and he is just turning to pursue his way with a gesture of disappointment, when a stifled cry arrests him. One of the horses has fallen, and a female head protruded from the window awakes the echo of the deserted street with agitated appeals for aid. The stranger was beside the carriage in an instant; with no less skill than strength he stilled the violent plunges of the frightened animals, and enabled the servants to recover their nerve, and after readjusting the harness to re-remove all interruption from their future progress.

Meanwhile, the lady who had called for assistance earnestly regarded the whole process, unmindful of the rain which drifted through the open window: as all was concluded, she beckoned their timely assistant thither.

"We are exceedingly obliged by your prompt aid," she was beginning, and at the same time extended something in her hand, when catching sight of the face of him she addressed,

she withdrew it hastily, and concluded her sentence in a totally different tone. "I perceive, sir, that I am still more indebted than I expected, and beyond the power of anything but thanks to acknowledge."

The stranger bowed slightly.

"I am sufficiently repaid by having been of service. Shall I desire your servant to drive on? All, I believe, is right now?"

He was answered by a dignified gesture of assent; and the carriage was about to proceed, when another voice from the interior caused a sudden halt.

The speaker was concealed from view, but her accents betrayed extreme youth. There was a silvery sweetness in them which would have instantly elicited the interest of a hearer, even had their purport been less flattering.

"And you," she said, "are you unsheltered in such a night as this? Have you no conveyance?" There was a shudder in the voice, as if the delicate organisation shrunk from the thought. "Oh, mamma!"

"Hush, Iva!" returned the lady, with some vexation. Then turning to the stranger, "Are you really exposed to the fury of the sky this evening?" she said, looking hurriedly around; "are there no vehicles to be had?"

"I thank you, madam; your solicitude is needless; I believe," addressing the unseen lady within, "I am amply provided against the storm."

"At all events, you will permit us to send the carriage back for you?" she said, eagerly. "The tempest increases; we have not far to go; pray accept the use of it to your destination."

The stranger indicated a grateful refusal, the next moment the glass was drawn up.

"Farewell, then," the elder lady had said, evidently relieved

at the somewhat extraordinary offer being unaccepted. "Home, Joseph! home, as speedily as you can!"

"Home!" the stranger repeated to the obsequious footman, who stood beside him. "You have not far to go?" interrogatively.

"No. —, sir, Park Lane," replied the man, in a low tone, touching his hat, and pocketing the proffered gratuity.

The carriage drove off.

For a second the stranger followed the receding vehicle with his eyes; then, slightly sighing, continued his way.

The fury of the tempest was by this time at its height; tired of resisting it, he at length halted, and ensconced himself under the eaves of a projecting shop-front, looking abstractedly through the half-illuminated window.

The shop was a receptacle for curiosities,—old worm-eaten furniture, half-blotted-out pictures; kitchen requisites, green with verdigris and black with age; books, minus backs and title-pages, with articles of fancy costume and musical instruments, straggling about upon the dirty floor. In the window were some glass cases, containing antediluvian specimens of plate and trinkets, while a few ticketed articles were temptingly suspended close to the panes.

One of these, with an affixed and somewhat disproportionate value, comes under the attention of the passer-by. It has nothing remarkable or interesting about it, bearing the appearance of a rough piece of glass, somewhat irregular in shape, and for what purpose destined is beyond the reach of surmise. It is covered with dust, yet, as the stranger glances on it, throws back a prismatic ray, which attracts further regard. He shifts his position, the ray pursues him, quivering and fiery. Still reflecting light, though *whence*, puzzles the gazer (a scientific and careful observer), it emits lambent gleams, fixing his undivided attention.

Strange words of mysterious import fall from his lips—he mutters in a low voice something about a shape, with wild unfathomable eyes; and of a gift—a magic—nay! a fatal gift, which to reveal were treason, to resist impossible! Finally, after a struggle by which a spectator would have been awed, he succumbs, and with a faint weak step, as of one who has been sorely tried, he yet eagerly enters the shop.

An old man, with a black velvet skull-cap upon his head, is sitting in a corner, threading large beads, amulets; whether for rosaries or not, seems doubtful. He rises slowly, and coming forward awaits his customer's commands.

The stranger in the mean time sinks, rather than places himself, upon a seat. He is pale and trembling, but endeavours to steady his voice, and to ask intelligibly, not to say calmly, for that mysterious object in the window. The comprehension he has to deal with seems of the smallest; some minutes elapse before the desired article is brought and placed before the eyes of the buyer.

When there, lying on the counter, unpurified from its obscuring dust, neither of the pair appearing to like contact with the uninteresting shapeless thing, still with rivetted gaze, the scrutiny of the visitor seem to draw deep scintillations of meaning from the dull crystal; strange expressions flit across his face, which, silent and observant, his companion, through all the mist of ignorance and age, stealthily notes.

At last the latter speaks:—

"This is the article you wished to see?"

"It is," replied the stranger, with difficulty rousing himself. "Here, take the money: I will buy it."

"Not so fast, good sir; not so fast! I can only part with the crystal under certain conditions."

"Conditions!" was the reply, with a somewhat sarcastic

curl of the lip; "conditions, forsooth! You affix a price, here it is. Give me the crystal!"

"For what purpose do you wish to possess it?" inquired the other, suspiciously. "It is useless, probably. I never yet saw a person who glanced at it a second time. It has been here for six years; since that terrible night when ——"

The eyes of the stranger flashed, though he said calmly,—

"Proceed; that terrible night when ——"

"I had been out buying furniture and plate, when, returning by a bye-street, I met one who hurried towards me with frantic haste. It was an awful night, something like the present one. He desired food and shelter: I replied, I could bestow neither.

"'False!' he cried, and added some scornful epithet; 'even this miserable glass utters more truth; for by it I know thou hast a home rich with comfort, a purse filled far beyond thine own wants: give me, then, only of thy superfluity!'

"He fainted; and, struck both by his words and condition, I had him conveyed home, where, by degrees, I learned his history. He told a rambling story of strange virtues peculiar to this glass, and led me, in spite of myself, to credit some of his assertions, though he never fully explained its powers. His mind appeared to wander amongst some favourite haunts in Germany; and when at length he died, this, his only possession, he left with me, upon the solemn promise that, if ever sold, it should be parted with for a certain sum; and, moreover, that though it appeared to myself nothing more than a dull specimen of natural production, I would never dispose of it to mortal man who could not read —— But what are you doing? what is there in it that thus engages your attention?"

"I see it all! him, also! plainly, distinctly!" and the stranger bent over the stone as though his eyes were fastened to its surface. "A little, dark, slightly-deformed person, one shoulder

higher than the other; a mark over the eye; pale, weak, and emaciated. There is a casket, too, in his hand, clamped with bars of iron ——"

"It is he!"

"He sits in a chamber, old and dark; an open window admits the view of a broad lake, whence the moon's rays are reflected. In the middle of the water rises a tower, a light within its turret ——"

"You see this? Oh, it is himself! it is the home he has so often described to me, deep in the bosom of the Hartz!"

"And now I see myself! my own image, tall and erect, but fearfully pallid! It strides to the casement! nay, nay, it fades! Here, take the money, I will have the crystal!"

"It is yours!" replied the other; "right glad am I to be spared its further custody. An unhallowed spell attends the accursed thing; and ever since it has remained here I have felt as if some mocking demon dodged my steps, in order to thwart my plans, and drown the joy of life in some ever vague foreboding. Take it, with its sparks and scintillations; may it be a better talisman to you than I have ever found it!"

The stranger grasped the talisman, and, with hasty agitation, counted down the price before the dealer. Was it a wailing sigh which struck on the ears of both as he let it fall, a dead weight, into the pocket of his coat? Why do they simultaneously raise their eyes, and listen fearfully for some more thrilling sound than the echo of the rain outside? Was it imagination? and were they *both* mistaken?

Hour the Second.

The season was at its height. Two very young girls, seated in the front of an opera-box, were regarding, with undissembled pleasure, the magic representation stretched upon the stage; while their *chaperone,* indolently ensconced behind the muslin curtains,

indulged herself with a nap during *scenas* which frequent repetition, or the apathy of age, rendered no longer interesting.

"Dear Leila," said the younger and fairer, as she flung back her rich dark hair, and drew a deep inspiration of pleasure, "how lovely is all this! Now that the curtain has fallen, I can scarcely imagine the scene real and tangible; for it seems a fairy-land, and Grisi one of those mythic syrens you and I have pondered over so many times."

"You look, speak, and feel, Iva, as I did when first mamma brought me hither," replied her companion, with a pretty little assumption of superiority, justified by the experience of that awakening process, a whole season in town. "Now I occupy myself less with the stage, and more with the people. See, opposite is Lady Fairlight, just coming in with her daughter, the young bride, the heroine of the most ridiculous marriage, though perfectly *à la mode*. Observe the husband, old enough to be her grandfather; and yonder is poor little Mrs. Ventelle, a widow bewitched! No, not there, child — the box below."

"It must be the same," murmured Iva, musingly, with eyes fixed upon the sole occupant of a box on the ground-tier, and close to the stage.

"You are not looking at those I pointed out, Iva," said the blue-eyed girl, following the gaze of her companion; "but that pale man: who is he? do you know him?"

"I think so, but am not certain. He seems like a gentleman who came to our rescue when mamma and I had that accident with the carriage, you remember."

"Really, how romantic! Have you met him since?"

"Never until now. Indeed I scarcely saw his face that night, it was so dark; but this evening, in passing through the lobby, I was struck by his voice, which reminded me strongly of the one I heard then. It is a voice not to be forgotten easily."

"Did he see *you?*"

"Have I not said it was too dark for either clearly to distinguish the other? Besides, I sat far back in the carriage; and although I spoke, it is probable that my voice would not have attracted him in such a violent night, neither do I think he noticed me."

"And yet," rejoined Leila, smiling, "observe him now—he has turned towards us; and see! his opera-glasses are raised. Silly child! why do you blush? Perhaps it is not you he is looking at, after all."

The glass was lowered as she spoke, and both maidens hastily averted their eyes.

"He cannot know me—impossible!" added Iva; "and yet how much there is in a voice!"

This was said with a sigh.

Meanwhile the object of these remarks had elicited attention from others beside themselves. Thrown into relief by the darkness behind him, his graceful head and intellectual brow looked like some sculptured image. After a few moments employed in making quiet, yet searching observation of the house, he quitted his box, and entering the pit upon the other side, approached closely the one occupied by the fair friends.

Several gentlemen hastily surrounded him, apparently proud of his notice, and eager to enter into conversation.

"Who is he?" whispered a young man, who had for some minutes been gazing with curiosity upon the stranger's commanding features.

"Do you not know him?" was the rejoinder, in the same tone. "Nearer this way, I will tell you."

"A few months since the town was roused from its indifference by the arrival of a mysterious personage, whose fame as a painter had preceded him. He is, nevertheless, an amateur, painting none but those in whose career he appears to portray something novel. Incidents, though developed apparently from his own

fancy alone, have been in many instances already proved so correct as to invest his productions (even but sketches) with almost magical interest. Not unfrequently he introduces some scene in which—perhaps known only to yourself—you have been an agent. For instance, I can vouch for this fact:—A lady went to him at her husband's request, desiring to be painted in a particular attitude. He chose another. Fancy the annoyance when he represented her over the card-table; her aristocratic features gleaming with the eager look of the practised gamester! The story, you may be sure, made much noise; but when, shortly afterwards, her husband was arrested, it came out that she had secretly lost considerably by gambling, though how *he* knew it baffled all conjecture. To-morrow I will take you to see his pictures."

"*Soit.* In the meantime introduce me."

They approached, and in a momentary glance the stranger seemed at once to comprehend the aspect of the new-comer. There is a species of absorption in some eyes, which possess the gift of imbibing the constituent elements of the object brought before them, and to re-issue the impressions made upon the mental mirror within, in penetration and intellectual intelligence so talismanic as to make all but honesty and sincerity recoil. It was evident that the sharp cunning about the lines of the new-comer's face afforded but poor protection against this penetrative scrutiny; also that the inner man cowered beneath his gaze, though an off-hand carelessness and an assumption of ease characterised his remarks.

"You are a shrewd investigator of physiognomy, I notice; may I ask your opinion of that one?" And he indicated an important-looking personage not very remote from where they stood.

"I see nothing extraordinary about him," was the reply, with a slight curl of the lip.

"No! yet he is one of our most wonderful men—Moidore, the rich merchant. Originally an ill-paid clerk, he now presides over one of the first firms; his house a model of luxurious ease: yet he is not selfish, but princely munificent, for his name figures at the head of half the charities, and ——"

"Enough; you speak of his outer life, and of the present. Shall I tell you of the future, and of his secret being?"

"You?"

The speaker observed that his companion had changed his attitude, and seemingly was absorbed in contemplating some glittering bauble in his hand; the thought crossed him he was mad.

"I say," repeated the stranger with sterner emphasis, "shall I show you the reverse of the picture, and reveal the rottenness of that pedestal on which Fortune and Hypocrisy place their favourites for a befooled world to worship? Yes, I will trace his claims to the position he occupies, and then tell you his deserved end."

"Deserved!"

"Yes. He rose by surreptitiously engaging the affections of his patron's daughter: has no breath of slander or truth—which you will—whispered how he requited her love and trust? The father succoured him in penury, raised him to wealth; the daughter now wanders about the streets, almost mad from destitution. He lavishes his tenderness upon one whom he deems his son—he is not so: no matter, fate or retribution has entrapped the cunning man! He is liberal, you say,—good; yet at this moment he meditates the refusal to his own brother of a ten-pound note! You would know the end of it all?—his speculations will fail,—he will die a pauper!"

"Hold, sir, he is one of my most intimate friends! By what right do you asperse a character like his? what proof have you? Remember, assertions are not facts!"

"I have plenty: though to men generally inexplicable, my assurance needs not the support of a single human testimony. Watch the result—your incredulity does not astonish me. Yet I could gain your belief (though perhaps it were scarcely worth while), by detailing the past and present history of another, of one whom I have never seen until now, and whose very name I am unfamiliar with."

"Whose?"

"*Your own.*"

The listener's countenance changed, despite himself.

"Shall I proceed?" continued the stranger almost mockingly, and fixing his relentless eyes upon his victim;—was he a charlatan? or a fanatic?

"Yes!" was the reply, in a voice husky with doubt and fear, perhaps scarcely suppressed passion.

"I will. Always an ambitious and designing boy, you know how skilfully you turned the generous frankness of other youths into the element of your own advantage. One trusted you: you deceived him. Do you remember that scene beneath the scathed and stunted tree close by the river? High words passed, all but curses upon your treachery; but he forebore to curse one whom he had once loved. Stung by his deserved reproaches, you rushed upon him; the world said, he *fell* into the river by accident, and so was drowned: you and I know better. Hush! your secret is safe with me. At present you are involved in a great will case; there is a paper you desire to pass as genuine, for if it do so, as seems likely, you will be the possessor of thousands. *It will not!*"

"For what reason?" exclaimed the other breathlessly, his want of caution at once verifying the accurate knowledge of his tormentor.

"Because your greatest enemy has the real document: it

came into his possession by the hands of a woman, whilst you thought it destroyed; she gave it to him, and he retains it till the proper hour. Your ruin will be complete."

"It is false! These tricks shall not delude me, neither shall you escape the penalty which these slanders ——"

"If they be so, what of them?"

"You have outraged my honour, and the insult shall be avenged; you shall hear from me."

"Stay," said the other, in the same calm voice he had preserved throughout, strangely impressive in its impassiveness. "Listen! I am not destined to fall, or even be wounded, by your hand; our very passions are fettered by the manacles of fate, and we cannot pass beyond its magic circle. Is it worth while to risk the alternative?"

There was a slight stir—a gentleman had fainted.

Ascending to the box-tier, the painter was now joined by a youth of singularly prepossessing appearance. Instantaneously, also, a most winning change of expression passed over his own features, and his voice assumed a light and almost joyous tone.

"What, my pupil!" he exclaimed, linking his arm with that of the other. "I hardly dreamed of finding you here to-night."

"I am looking up my relations, De Grey. After our long absence in Italy, I really must become acquainted with some; and find, indeed, no difficulty, if the warmth of my welcome continues everywhere ——"

"As it will; the world's doors are well-oiled to admit the heir to 40,000*l.* a-year and a marquisate."

"A truce to your philosophy; let me enjoy my vanity at least for a time, or I shall begin to lecture you *en revanche*. And, indeed, you are changed, De Grey, and have grown a perfect misanthrope. When I first knew you, and opened my

eyes after that terrible struggle with a watery death, from which you saved me at Como, they rested on quite another man. Your face was lively then, your manner jovial—only, perhaps, at times, a trifle abstracted: now, since we came to town, you look twenty years older, and utter sentiments so ascetic and *blasé*, as show you to be a perfect stranger to the joy I feel in this gay scene."

"Dear Jocelyn!" exclaimed the other, with a sad smile, "you know there are 'some who become old in their youth,' and, perhaps," he added after a pause, "'die ere middle age.' I am growing more reflective, and, consequently, more sad. Bear with me; my pictures teach me ——"

"Let us hear their doctrine another time; canvass commentators upon life are very well in galleries, but they are an affront to such living expositors of light and loveliness as we see here. Look! the ballet is about to commence; Lady Rivers is quitting her box—she, whose immaculate decorum has obtained the *sobriquet* of the 'Agna Casta!' Can anything be more charming than the pure innocence of that expression?" A lady bowed as she passed, leaning on the arm of a handsome and fashionably-dressed man. "What a subject for you there!"

De Grey shuddered. "I have such strange thoughts!" he said, turning away.

"My dear fellow! what incomprehensible humour possesses you?"

"I behold nothing with pleasure: yet it is no fault of mine. I gaze into the future and ——"

"Heaven forbid that either of us should do so. To what purpose, in either case? the knowledge is at least unpalatable, if not destructive. The seer must either be a man who, predicting evil, is uncredited like Cassandra, or, with all his boasted power, like Tiresias is blind to escape it."

"You are right—I think so too. Now, would you believe it, even *that* sweet face, those dovelike eyes, thrill me with horror: I see their tenderness lavished upon another, not her husband! I watch him heart-broken, bowed, prematurely old, while she!—your Agna Casta!—sinks lower! lower!"

"Pshaw! you are hipped—melancholy—and are giving utterance to mere rhodomontade. Come! I am going to the Duchess of Beaulieu's box, and shall not leave you while you are in this state, lest the next thing I should hear of you should be before a Commission of Lunacy."

"Ah, well! you deserve all my thanks, for charming me out of my fantasies, if you like to deem them so. I will accompany you,—as well there, as anywhere else. Stay, you know Mrs. Greville?"

"The dowager?"

"No; the one in Park Lane. Introduce me there; she and her daughter are both here to-night."

"Indeed! I did not know she had a daughter out. Come along."

The box-door opened, and Leila and her friend beheld the young aristocrat and his companion enter. Mrs. Greville woke up from her nap to commence a lively conversation with her young kinsman, while De Grey seated himself, after a primary introduction, between the two girls. There was something which not only placed his companions at once almost upon the footing of old acquaintance, but so irresistibly winning in his manner, that Iva thought she had never enjoyed a chat fraught with more interest and pleasure. De Grey possessed the rare facility of eliciting the very topics which he seemed intuitively to know were interesting to each individual; and if a companion had one string of thought to play on, the touch of his questioning soon awoke its harmony.

Once, Leila left her side for a moment.

"You recognised me, then?" De Grey had said, bending down, and gazing admiringly upon her sweet face.

"Oh, yes!" she replied immediately: "I could not mistake your voice." Then blushing deeply, "I hoped to meet you when I saw you opposite, to thank you for your help that night; and mamma, too ——"

The stranger's look beamed—the first real ray of unmixed pleasure which had lit up his noble features. So strangely powerful was its influence, that she whom he addressed felt her heart bound beneath the expression, anxious, apparently, to speak again; for his eyes were still upon hers, and their fervour brought the eloquent blood to her cheek.

"Do you notice that old man yonder, so calm and observant, his eyes gleaming from under their deep brows? How he watches the actress as she breathes her impassioned song!—No wonder! How beautifully she warbles! how tall and majestic her figure towers! Poor, little, insignificant old man!"

"Suppose I were to tell you, that ere long the dwarf you look at and the brilliant singer will be man and wife? Meanwhile, that every note she warbles is for *his* ear—that every passionate gesture is dictated by her affection for *him?* And well it may be, for in that cramped and puny body breathes a soul which shortly will place its owner upon the very Ida of the intellect. No! you would not believe me?—I thought not!"

At this moment Leila rejoined them, and overhearing a part of the preceding sentence, asked De Grey his opinion of a face not far from them.

"Do you think there is anything melancholy about Miss Castleford's expression—I mean the great beauty yonder? I cannot see aught but joyous life as she turns, first to one and then to another, among her host of admirers; yet Miss Greville thinks she recognises sadness amidst all her vivacity."

De Grey looked down. "Miss Greville is right," he said,

quietly: "the shadow is already cast; the cloud hangs above! Death, the great merchant, has set his seal of disease upon his property, and will shortly send for it! I am no physician, and would therefore forbear to fix (as human skill sometimes pretends to do) the period when hope, and light, and love, must vanish: but," he added, rousing himself, "let us not amass our griefs before the time; the hour is not at hand for either of *you*, fair ones! at least, if it be" (with a convulsive sigh), "may *I* never be its prophet!"

He rose, and with a bow hurriedly left the box: when Jocelyn turned to seek his friend, he was gone!

Hour the Third.

Let us enter the studio of the artist—it is evening, and the shades are gathering still deeper in the already darkened room. A curtain, half-shading the window, completely obscures the portion immediately below it; beyond, folding-doors admit the rays of an antique lamp, faintly illuminating the graceful details of the adjoining chamber, poetical and fairy-like in its every arrangement. The soft summer breeze rising from the river below gently stirs the muslin drapery; on the smooth bosom of the "silent highway" sounds of busy life are borne, yet at so great a distance as only to render the repose more soothing and intense, like thoughts which the heart acknowledges as symptoms of its deeper tides, but which, when they rise to the surface, bring no eddy to break the tranquil flow of the soul's expanse.

The friends are together. De Grey, half-reclined upon a deeply-cushioned bergère, is watching Jocelyn Waldegrave as he stands beside the easel, upon which are placed two pictures, the one a copy from the other: a sweet, natural sketch, from his friend's pencil.

Several other paintings are in the room: in each lurks a certain indefinite characteristic, felt and acknowledged by the

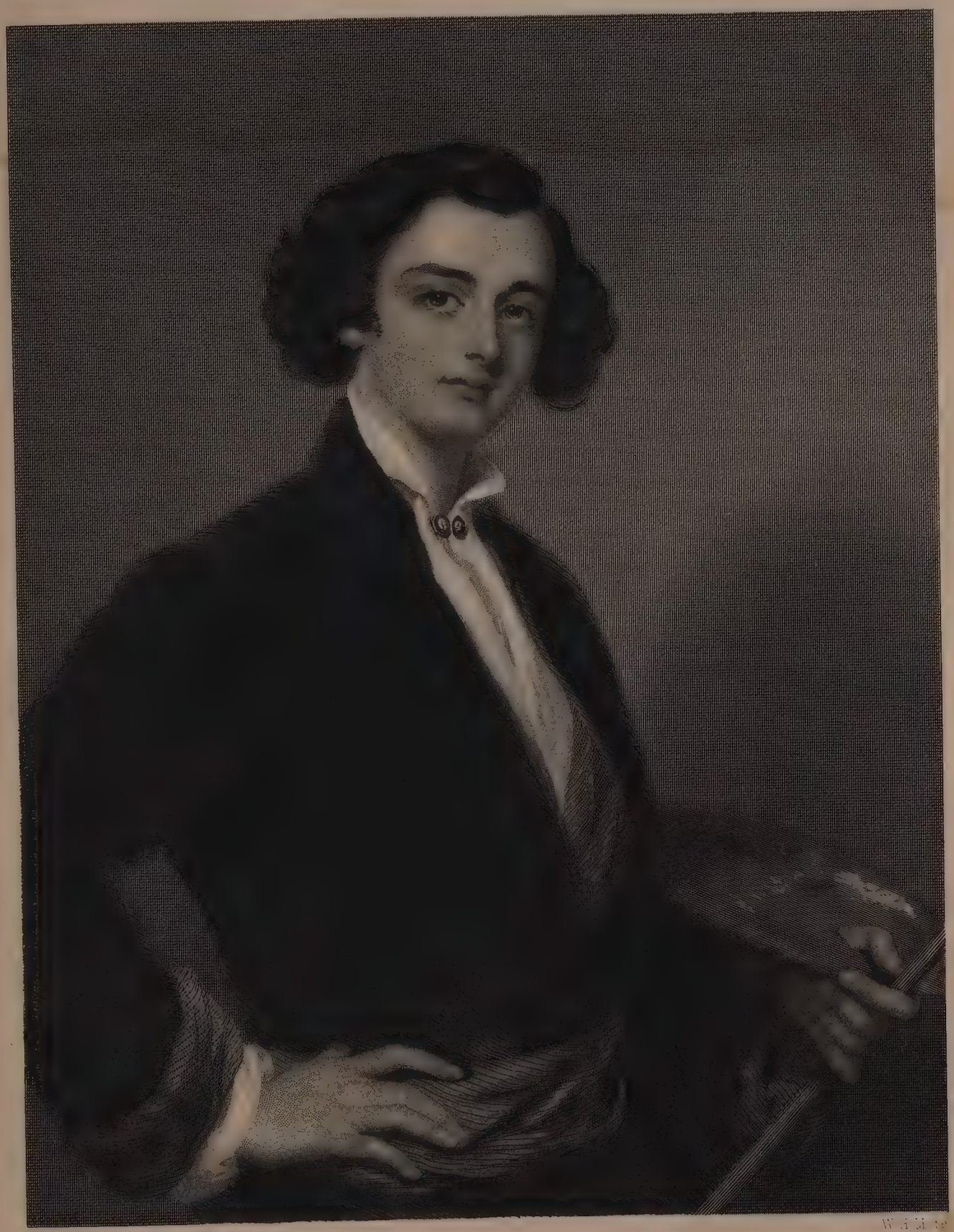
mind, though in some instances wholly inexplicable to the eye. They are principally scenes from life, though apparently of the mind's inner existence, and are rare works of art, many of them bearing features transcendently lovely: yet their beauty brings no pleasure generally, and in some produces an almost uncomfortable sensation. There is a doubtful, clouded expression frequently, and completely at variance with the attitude. This, however, is absent altogether from the portrait upon the easel.

It is the face of Iva Greville, pure, unflattered, natural—just as she speaks and looks. The beautiful lips unclosed, the faint blush upon the downy cheek; yet even here we notice a downcast tenderness in the gaze, which was not there when last we saw her at the Opera a little month ago. Is the expression prophetic, or does her face now actually wear it? Is it that the slumbering beauty has awakened to life beneath the magic touch of love? Perhaps so.

Wrapped in contemplation before it stands young Waldegrave, himself a fitting subject for a sketch. His graceful figure gains additional beauty of outline from the lines of flowing velvet in which it is draped; the collar thrown back, as if for air, gives freedom to the throat and neck, the complexion of which, fair as a woman's, is relieved from effeminacy by the darker-tinted face, mellowed by a warmer climate. One hand rests upon his side, the other sustains the palette. Around his waist he wears a Turkish shawl, twisted after the Oriental fashion—a fancy of De Grey's. He contemplates with a pleased smile his copy of the picture. Yes! he is right; it is equal to the original!

"My friend," exclaimed De Grey, "you will soon surpass your master; the art, which came to me a gift, I have improved by practice and experience. You have it also, and my lessons as well. It is a pity we neither of us require the profits of a profession we both have embraced so warmly."

"Nay, I cannot wish myself dispossessed of the advantages



R.Buckner

W. J. White

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fortune has given me. I need them all; and just now, especially, would not part with them for worlds."

"Indeed! I too am disposed, just at this time, to regard worldly wealth and station more genially. The sudden account of Mr. Greville's fatal speculations——"

"My own reason. I am going to offer him this very morning free use of my purse. Thank Heaven, it is a well-filled one!"

"Though probably unnecessary," interposed De Grey, with a half smile. "I am no Crœsus, but——" he hesitated, "I possess, perhaps, a claim, or may do so, to assist——"

"You speak in enigmas: it is too true, you own some hidden knowledge which forewarns you of the future, and furnishes you with a clue to actions past and present. These very pictures breathe a mystery; ever you develope to me some new relation: so that, like the student of Egyptian lore in ancient days, I walk by the light of an arch-priest through long passages, in which obscurity only renders immense forms of half-discovered truth, more vast and awful by revealing their very indistinctness. Do you know what is said of you, my friend? The foolish world, superstitious in its ignorance, deems that you have travelled upon the track of some forbidden lore. I know otherwise: the kindest, tenderest spirit, could not ally itself to the enemy of good; but——"

"Listen, Jocelyn. We met first in scenes where Nature in her grandest form, and purest, evokes, nay more, instils thoughts of excellence, and awakens holy aspirations by the sublimity she wears in every aspect. Ever since that time I have cherished for you a love deeper than our hard sex allows itself to feel in its searing commerce with the world. Hence I will confess to you—I *do* possess a power beyond the reach of those who jostle us in the streets. My eyes are given to see the mystic lines of the Future, and scenes are pictured before me which as

surely come to actuality as the shadow follows the setting sun. I carry a talisman which has been faithful to the fatal trust to which it was appointed—fool that I was to desire to know the secrets of the after-being here, and to anticipate the echo of Fate before the footstep of Circumstance has fallen! It is done! would that I could annihilate the fruition of my mad desire! But it may not be. I am brought face to face with Truth, and feel that what should be to us a goddess is to me a fiend! Happiness, Hope, Trust, all flowers of promise, all blossoms of imagination, all sweet untried mysteries, wither and decay before the hot desert-wind of scathing Reality. Men talk of the misery of doubt; would that I could know its blessedness! But if I ask a question mentally, the silent answer of the magic stone is immediately and distinctly given; so that, from actual cognizance of the circumstances, I arrive almost at the very thoughts of those about whom I occupy myself; and did I now, at this very moment, ask of what is Jocelyn Waldegrave thinking, the response would be immediate, full, and true."

The auditor started, and a blush suffused his face: so does the heart even of frank youth shrink from the touch of another's scrutiny.

"Go on!" he said, hastily.

"I have but little more to add: you know my secret, may you never know its curse! Sufficient that it has been a minister of evil to me in its never-failing accuracy. In every case, disappointment and pain have awakened beneath the touch of this fatal talisman. Like the dragons' teeth of old, where I presumptuously have sown in my thirst for forbidden knowledge, I have reaped a harvest of contending mental perplexities, enemies to my peace and joy; but, unlike the fable, these warring, fearful fantasies, do not destroy themselves. I feel, until my very being, perchance, is thrown amongst them, for which they seem to crave. Friendship has been deprived of its

sincerity—Wit of its point—Hospitality of its charm—Love of its purity—while over all reigns Selfishness supreme, discovered even to the short-sightedness of its very appetency! Alas, this fearful secret has been mine but a few months, and now look at me! Was I not young when first, then newly-touched by this wild longing, granted for its own punishment, I met you? and now, look I not old and stricken?"

"Alas, you are changed! yet, why not destroy the fatal gift? Shiver it to fragments, fling it into the bosom of the wave!"

"It is forbidden; the possessor is bound to make constant trial of its virtues: but sufficient, let us not speak of that. Attend! In the case of two persons only I have put off the evil day, and delayéd to the last my investigation of their hidden character, and of the lines of their future destiny. Heaven knows, Waldegrave, not from doubt of their sincerity, but from the ever-frightful dread of the bitter cup which may be in store for either of them—perhaps for myself through their means. You, my friend! I have never probed the bosom of the future for you—never asked whether you would be powerful, happy, good. May your lot only be such as I would render it! I know your heart, my Jocelyn! and could see nothing but light there—light of love for me. But the other! oh, that other is even more nearly entwined about my being! I dare not look upon the glass. I dare not gaze, lest I should see a grave gape where flowers appear so brightly strown, and the cup so heavenly sweet be not for me to taste!"

"You love, then! I thought so."

"Even so. But I will pause no longer: perchance all may yet be bright for me; perchance this one brilliant page may cast a radiance over all other—the dark leaves of destiny. Grant the whole world be deceitful and hollow in its mockery, you and she may both smile for me—both be mine in love and friendship; yes (be still, my jealous heart!), mine alone!"

"And does she you love know the violence of the passion she has inspired? can she guess the intensity of the love a nature like yours can feel?"

"I think she can. I think she—— Hush! softly! oh! Jocelyn, bow down thine ear to my lips—I think she feels—I think she returns it. Yet, oh, if I am mistaken!"

Waldegrave turned towards him, the tears dimmed his gaze as it sought that of his companion. He gently laid his hand upon his arm.

"Go, my friend!" he said, softly; "go, then, and tell your tale of love. Gaze boldly upon the mirror of the future; come good or ill, my friend! my preceptor! my preserver! you who first taught my heart to aspire—my hand to practise this divine art—consult your talisman! Summon the picture of my thought, and never shall you see there one black spot between Waldegrave and De Grey!"

The latter scarcely seemed to hear the last words. Musing and abstracted, he appeared to contemplate some remote object. At length, hurriedly going to a cabinet, he took something from its recesses. "Wait there!" he exclaimed, standing beside the picture, "and pray for me! If I fail—— but, no—Hope is left even to me; the crystal"—its touch seemed to burn as he spoke,—"has not yet entirely forbidden that. Pray for me—pray for me!"

* * * * *

Mr. Greville had received a letter from De Grey the morning before, in reply to which the latter had been summoned; yet the information the answer gave, the permission it granted, had been alike unheeded. It was late in the evening when, with a blush that thrilled through her veins, Iva heard her father's step upon the staircase.

"My daughter!" he said, entering, and affectionately kissing her forehead; "he is here, anxious to thank you, eager

to claim your hand. Dearest Iva! my child, my guardian angel, I shall be saved through this marriage, I shall dare to look up again upon the world. Nay! why so pale? we can both owe a favour to De Grey—*n'est-ce pas?*"

He smiled, and sought to elicit a responsive glance.

The beautiful girl made no reply, but silently placing her arms around her father's neck, followed him with drooping head to the apartment where her lover awaited her, and where her father left them.

De Grey was very pale. The confirmation of his hopes was, perhaps, too thrilling to be borne without a rush of pain as well as pleasure.

Gently drawing her arm within his own, and pressing her hand for a moment to his lips, he drew her to a seat.

"My Iva! may I not say mine?" he murmured. "Your father gives me the right to claim this dear hand ——"

She was weeping already. Oh, blessed tears of joy!

"My Iva!"—tenderly wreathing his arm around her—"Hush, sweetest one! I am here listening—close—close—for the slightest syllable—whisper but a word, a single word ——"

It came at his bidding. "Yes;" and her voice was stifled in sobs.

"Your father!" he went on, still retaining her hand, and caressing the bright curls which lay upon his bosom; your father, Iva, has told you all ——"

"Oh, yes!" she said, lifting her eyes, and a sparkle came into them as she gazed upon his manly features; "you have saved him, and for my sake, noble as you are! How delicately have you arranged all! My grateful lips will never cease to invoke blessings on you for your succour of my father!"

"Think not of that now. Money! mere dross! Oh, a brighter reward I—selfish!—aspire to. Say, is it mine?"

"You know my heart—you know my gratitude!"

"Hush! that word again! You are to love me, sweetest, not to thank. What have I done for thanks? But your heart, that priceless gift, not to be bought——"

"Be satisfied, it is filled with your image. Oh, De Grey, I will try to be a true and loving wife to you, for I owe my father to you. Believe me, I will!"

She burst into tears.

"My Iva, will it need trying? Nay! not that reproachful look. Oh, dearest! I love you so tenderly; my whole being is so absorbed in, and twined about your influence, that I should die if not loved as truly. You are my whole life, my whole dependence!"

"Dear De Grey!"

"Call me Reginald; come, you must speak the words. I must hear you say you love me! Oh! Iva, I must be loved wildly, absorbingly! You have this to give, have you not? What! you will not speak? Cruel! then see here! Come, you shall not even whisper the precious assurance: look, Iva, here is a mirror which shall reflect your inmost thoughts!"

She turned and looked hurriedly upon him. He was gazing fixedly into the glass he held, and endeavoured by drawing her cheek towards his to make her look into it too: she turned away.

"What! you are ashamed even to see me satisfy myself? You will not look? But I am relentless, and will detect your thoughts. Now I shall see the object which fills your soul, the form of him you love! Oh, mirror-crystal! now beloved as formerly detested! revealing my own image in thy mysterious depths! Iva's lover—husband!——"

—— Hush! what wild wailing comes upon the evening breeze, as though a spirit's pain disturbed the ripples of the air? He gazes with panting eagerness, and eyes which seemed spell-bound upon the surface of the crystal. What sees he there?

Reflected there shines a fair and graceful image, but not his own, with something of a mocking smile upon the erewhile gentle lip. Yes! it is another's form—it is Jocelyn! as he stands that very moment by the portrait of Iva, his hand upon his side, his head slightly depressed!

He dashed the crystal to the ground—it broke into a thousand pieces; then, covering his face with his hands, he seemed to fall helpless upon the seat by his side.

Several minutes elapsed before he spoke.

"So you would have deceived me, even you!" he murmured. "Oh! Truth, where art thou?" And his voice rose to a cry of agony. "It is well! Life has no more bitterness: my eyes are no longer veiled, they can look upon no further pain."

"What is it?" inquired Iva, shuddering at the changed face before her.

"What?" he repeated, rising and seizing her furiously by the wrist. "Traitress! you love me not! Oh, falsehood! sweet, beguiling treachery! another's image and not mine is stamped upon thy heart! 'Tis Jocelyn Waldegrave you adore!"

The tell-tale blood rushed for a moment to her cheek, then left it pale as marble. "What mean you?" she exclaimed. "Jocelyn Waldegrave has never breathed a syllable of love to me!"

"Go to! You are his destined wife! False! false! I see it all now—the last hope is shattered; all is lost, and I am calm! Oh! wretched privilege of grief to paralyse with its own pain, and to steep the overwrung heart in the very stupor of its sadness! Yet one thing I will know; you would have married me, while you yet loved another. Say! why was this? Nay, you shall tell me, frankly: why was this deception practised upon me?—for gratitude, forsooth, too! Oh! amazing perfidy!"

She was too terrified to weigh her words. "Did you not save my father? He could not otherwise accept your aid; my

hand was the price, and I would have tried—indeed, I would have done all, to ——" Her voice was lost in sobs.

He gazed upon her almost with fear, then all his passion and resentment vanished. The slender figure was cowering at his feet, her tears had wet the hand which so forcibly grasped her own. Impelled by remorse and swiftly-returning tenderness he raised her, and, averting his face, said gently,—

"Iva, tell me sincerely, did you know you loved him?"

"Never! until this moment:" her cheek crimsoned by the frank avowal. "Your words have laid bare to me my own heart. But why, De Grey, should Jocelyn love me? I know not. Alas! you have forced me to speak; this is degrading! dreadful!"

"Be calm, poor child! and listen. I ask but one act of obedience—my carriage is at the door, I will take but the last sitting in my studio for your picture. Be not alarmed: you will come?"

Awed by his manner, she bowed, and followed him mechanically down stairs. De Grey placed her in the vehicle; but first gathered up the fragments of the broken crystal.

Jocelyn was still standing, with hands clasped, before the picture of Iva: his friend advanced closely towards him, and beckoned Iva to his side.

"Miss Greville is here," he said, unmindful of Jocelyn's expression of surprise, "for her last sitting. Quick! arrange your colours, for I am suddenly summoned upon a long journey, and ——"

"She goes with you? Alas! is it then so? Farewell to all! Farewell, Iva! Lost! lost!"

The face of the young painter worked tremulously, his lips became ashen, his whole frame quivered. Suddenly he staggered, and would have fallen to the ground had not De Grey supported him.

"Are you convinced?" he said, sadly, drawing Iva forward. "There! comfort, console him. Let truth be for once a bless-

ing; whisper your love into his ear, bring his soul back to joy: he needs all your assurances to restore him. There! now, farewell! an irresistible agency calls me away; my thread of life, I seem to feel, is severed with the broken crystal. When I first looked upon its mocking surface, I saw reflected there the seer by whose forbidden thirst for knowledge its mystic influence was evoked; now it is shattered! yet, let me whisper it to you, the same scene stands before me still! This chamber seems not mine, it is darkened, old with the unhallowed deeds of a long past time. See! through the casement a tower rises in the middle of the lake!—a light gleams within the turret! There! do you not see?"

"Oh, De Grey, calm yourself! there is nothing but your own fantasy: the moon glimmers through the heavy clouds: no tower, no turret is there." With consoling earnestness, the lovers twined their arms around him, and with passionate entreaties implored him to compose himself: he threw them wildly off.

"I am called!" he vociferated. "Do you not hear his voice? He summons me,—I must away! You mark him not? A little humpbacked man, pale, and with long beard. He beckons again! Ah! now he threatens, with his arms extended, raised as if to curse. I come! no force can bind me from him. I come! I come!"

A plunge! and the cavern of the waters opened, foamed for an instant in the whirl and eddy of their surge, then smiled away their wrath in softened circles, and flowed on! The tired heart, the maddened spirit, the wild, tumultuous agony of life's corroding care, buried in the dark abysses, as the grown bark conceals the broken barb! A fitful wail fell on the maiden's ear—a glance true, even in life's parting hour, was on her soul; and twining his arm around her, the lover and his adored stood beneath the moonbeam, glistening on the flowing river, silent and alone!

LA TOILETTE.

PAR LE CHEVALIER DE CHATELAIN.

Bonne Inès ne va pas si vite,
Au bal où l'on m'attend là bas,
Entends-tu, comprends-tu petite ?
Lui peut-être ne viendra pas.
Il m'a quitté d'humeur chagrine
Hier . . . . . je comptais sur son bras :
Inès son regard me fascine,
M'aime-t-il ? ou m'aime-t-il pas ?

Dans l'espérance de lui plaire
J'ai mis ce costume charmant ;
Oh ! qu'il en coûte à satisfaire
Les vœux, les desirs d'un amant ?
Avec lui mon penser chemine,
Il le suit partout, pas à pas, ...
Inès son regard me fascine,
M'aime-t-il ? ou m'aime-t-il pas ?

Hier c'était à la nuit close,
Je l'apperçus là bas, là bas,
Vois, il m'apportait cette rose
Si proche aujourd'hui du trépas :
Il me parla de Caroline . . . .
Oh ! comme je souffrais, hélas !
Inès son regard me fascine,
M'aime-t-il ? ou m'aime-t-il pas ?

Ne puis le voir, ne puis l'entendre
Sans sentir un profond émoi ;
Et quoique son parler soit tendre
Il a l'autorité d'un roi :
Sa voix est douce et cristalline,
C'est le frais parfum du lilas ;
Inès son regard me fascine,
M'aime-t-il ? ou m'aime-t-il pas ?

Et la blonde et timide amante
Sur la rose inclinait ses yeux,
Et son âme candide, aimante
Y rêvait un rêve des cieux,
D'une rose sans son épine,
Tout en murmurant, mais bien bas :
Inès son regard me fascine,
Mais . . . . . il m'aime bien n'est-ce pas ?

THE SPECIAL TRAIN.

A TALE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY H. S.

Chapter I.

It was towards the end of the season, and almost every house in the fashionable parts of the metropolis indicated signs of the approaching departure of its fair inhabitants to enjoy the calmer pleasures of a country life. In the splendid mansion of the Earl de Clifford, however, preparations of a very different nature were being carried on—for the morrow was to be celebrated with festivities and rejoicings suitable to the bridal day of a daughter of that noble house.

Lady Evelyn de Clifford had retired awhile to the seclusion of her own apartment; and there we will follow her, to give a brief description of the youthful being, so soon about to exchange the careless gaiety and radiant dreams of girlhood for the sterner realities of life.

Everything around denoted a refined and elegant taste, and the lovely little boudoir, always so richly furnished with all that could charm the eye, seemed on this occasion to realise some brilliant vision of fairy-land. A profusion of costly ornaments, the bridal gifts of friends and relatives, were scattered around, and, almost every moment something new and beautiful was added to this choice collection. But Evelyn heeded them not; and bitter, indeed, must have been the thought that could impart such a tinge of sadness to her usually animated countenance, and lent it a deeper shade of grief than that which could

have sprung from the lingering regret to leave the home—the companions of her childhood; for then, the thought of trusting love and confiding hope would have mingled with these feelings, and have taken half their bitterness away.

The little Constance de Clifford had been examining, with childish admiration and curiosity, the sparkling diamonds and snowy pearls so soon to deck her sister's sunny hair; and at last, kneeling by her side, sought to attract her attention to them.

"Why are you so silent and thoughtful, dearest Evelyn?" she exclaimed; "and will you not admire with me all these pretty presents?"

Evelyn, rousing herself from her reverie, and bending over Constance, said, as she embraced her fondly:—

"Ah, Constance! you little know—may you never learn ——" and then, stopping abruptly, hastily quitted the room: perhaps to hide from all eyes the emotion she could not repress.

Yes, weep Evelyn! though these tears may come all too late to redeem the happiness you have forfeited, yet the sigh of remorse, the tear shed in sincere repentance, will not pass unmarked by Him who registers our most secret actions.

Chapter II.

Evelyn de Clifford was beautiful—very beautiful—and, as is too often the case, prized above all others that fatal gift which, so many a time, has worked out misery for its thoughtless possessors.

Clever, accomplished, the spoiled child of Nature and Fortune had learnt from her cradle that all must bend to her will, and, with feelings of a higher and purer order than those of the heartless world around her, had been taught to yield obedience to its dictates, and to fear, above all things, its censure.

A season in town had effaced most of the lingering feelings of truth and generosity, so familiar to youth; and indifferent to

all, save the applause which gratified her vanity, she had mingled in scenes of festivity, envied and admired by all yet caring for none.

It was generally rumoured that Evelyn de Clifford was not made for love: but they knew not, as yet, that one far superior, both in talents and noble qualities, to those around her, had sought and won her affection, and then gradually endeavoured to lead her on to higher and better objects. It was long ere the world could bring itself to own that Gerald de Vere had gained an ascendancy over the haughty Evelyn, and had conquered the love they deemed would never have been bestowed.

But Gerald, though of a noble family, possessed only the small portion of a younger son; though this was partly atoned for by talents which ensured him a rapid progress in the diplomatic career he had chosen for himself. And, therefore, it was with a lingering sigh of regret for the rank and riches she renounced that Evelyn, having refused, through her parents, to the offer made her, a few days after, by the Duke of Claremont, besought them to consent to her union with a less wealthy suitor.

Lord de Clifford was too upright and generous to wish to force his daughter's inclinations, and, though he spoke much in favour of the Duke, yet gave the wished-for permission; with the condition, however, that a year should elapse ere the cousins entered into any decisive engagement.

Time at first passed rapidly for Gerald and Evelyn; but the haughty spirit of the latter often rebelled, even against the most trifling concessions. She was told in secret, by sympathising friends, that the world pitied her, and wondered how the beautiful and admired Evelyn de Clifford could sacrifice rank and wealth, and all they deemed most desirable in life, to one who possessed none of these requisites to recommend him to her favour. And the praises of the Duke of Claremont were spoken

continually around; till Evelyn half regretted what she began to fancy a mere passing delusion.

Gerald could not bear her altered manner. Warm and impetuous himself, her coldness wounded him deeply, and he attempted to remonstrate with her on her heartless conduct. But remonstrances were only answered by haughty and indifferent words, and Gerald, more in sorrow than in anger, renounced for ever the hopes he had once held so dear; and, in a voice which he vainly endeavoured to render as calm as her own, breathed an eternal farewell to one so unworthy of his love.

A few days saw Gerald de Vere a wanderer in a foreign land—in a few weeks it was announced to the world that Evelyn was engaged to the Duke of Claremont.

She had, indeed, half repented of her conduct to Gerald, and had long watched anxiously for his return, to ask (all unused as she was to ask a request) his forgiveness.

But he came not; and with all the worst feelings once more roused in her heart, in the moment of anger which followed the intelligence that he had quitted England, she accepted the offer which was again renewed by the Duke in the absence of his rival.

Since that fatal day she had not known an hour's peace, and though the world deemed her contented, yet the restless glance of her eye might have betrayed to a more observant spectator that such was far from being the case.

Often was she tempted to confide to Lord de Clifford the secret of her despair; but the remembrance that her father would hold her engagement sacred, checked the confidence she longed to impart.

And how much more bitter did these feelings become, when day after day brought the certainty that they had all been much deceived in the character of the Duke of Claremont!

Many years older than Evelyn, he could not enter into or appreciate her more youthful feelings, and all his words and actions proved him to be selfish and cold—violent and harsh to his dependants—inconsiderate, or rather cruel, in his conduct towards the tenants on his extensive domains. Lord de Clifford perceived this with sorrow; but the composure of his daughter led him to fancy she was indifferent to such defects, and would deem them amply atoned for by such a brilliant position.

Thus the weary hours passed away, and brought at last the day so long looked forward to by Evelyn with dread and abhorrence.

Chapter III.

About two hours after the scene we have just recorded, Lady Evelyn descended to the drawing-room, attired for a drive. No trace of the recent emotion was visible in her countenance, and though her cheek was paler than usual, none could have imagined that her calm and cheerful smile was assumed to hide an aching heart.

The Duke handed her to the carriage and seated himself by her side, after having ordered the coachman to drive to one of the most famous jewellers, to order there a diamond *parure* which he wished to present to her. Without caring much for Evelyn, his vanity had led him to seek the hand which others envied him; and it was more from ostentation than from any other feeling that he lavished the splendid gifts on her which real affection would have rendered so much more valuable.

Evelyn looked with indifference on the costly ornaments displayed before her, and finally selected the least expensive and most simple, though the Duke expressed much disapprobation of the taste which dictated such a choice.

As they turned to depart, Evelyn's attention was arrested by an old woman, whose attire, though denoting extreme poverty,

seemed, by its neatness, to show that its owner had known better days; and there was an air of superiority about her which might well confirm the supposition.

Evelyn had already advanced to offer the aid she fancied was about to be requested; but rejecting, almost scornfully, the proffered gift, the old woman stepped forward, and with a glance of mingled sorrow and anger sternly addressed the Duke of Claremont, who had in vain endeavoured to hide himself from her gaze.

It was long ere the spectators could comprehend for what wrongs she claimed redress, or what meaning they might attach to the reproaches, which seemed to imply that some injustice had been committed.

At length, however, Evelyn gathered from her imperfect and broken exclamations the following melancholy tale:—The Duke had turned her only son out of the farm where, for centuries, his ancestors had been faithful tenants on his estate. This unjust and cruel action had been the prelude to the greatest misery; poverty and ruin gradually followed, and at an early age she had seen her son sink broken-hearted to the grave, leaving her, friendless and alone, to struggle with the fate that had proved so hard to her.

"Yes," she added, with a kindling cheek and a flashing eye, "yes, proud and cruel man! the day of retribution will come. My ancestors fought and bled for yours, and we, for the sake of the benefits we received, the gratitude we owed your family, would have lived and died for you; but you have broken faithful hearts—you have scorned the affection of the poor—the tribute of gratitude, which is all they have to offer! Cruel and inconsiderate, you have brought misery and death into a happy and united family. And now, with the weight of guilt upon your conscience—surrounded by all that the world can give of pomp and grandeur—you will pledge your faith at the altar to a fair and noble bride, and care not though, callous as your

self, she has broken a truer heart than yours. Yes, go! but in the hour of triumph and prosperity remember that I have prophesied, that ere the morrow's sun set on your bridal day, a dark and terrible fate awaits those who seem so little to dread the justice of Heaven. There will be sorrowing hearts and bitter retribution for our wrongs to-morrow!"

Evelyn, pale and terrified, sought in vain to detain her, almost wildly imploring her to revoke those fatal words; but the Duke sternly motioned to drive on, coldly remarking that he would give orders to have the unfortunate lunatic secured in some safe asylum. But Evelyn had perceived that this warning voice, though wild and irregular in its accents, was the voice of anger but not of madness, and never for a moment imagined that the wrongs she complained of were but the feverish delusions of a lost or wandering intellect.

That evening a messenger from Evelyn aroused the lonely inhabitant of a miserable abode, in one of the darkest streets in London; and the old woman, with surprise not unmingled by softer feelings, perused the letter addressed to her. It was very short, and written in evident agitation, yet breathed a spirit far different from that which usually animated Evelyn's brilliant and careless style. She besought her not to refuse the temporary aid again proffered, and to remember that, whatever influence she might possess with the Duke, would be exerted to induce him to atone for his past injustice. She concluded by begging her to think less harshly of them both, and to revoke the fatal words which seemed to presage yet more of sorrow to one who, however wrongly she might have acted, yet deserved pity almost as much as blame.

The night was far spent, but Evelyn still remained in a deep and painful reverie: for though she felt more easy now the act of partial reparation had been committed, yet she still thought, with a feeling of terror, of the undefined yet awful doom the dreaded morrow might bring forth.

At last, kneeling by her couch, she breathed one short prayer for protection and forgiveness, and then forgot for a while the sorrows of the present and fears for the future in a deep and calm repose.

Chapter IV.

The morning came at last, but not bright and fair as a bridal day should have been. The sky was dark and clouded, and the rain, pouring down in torrents, made everything seem as cheerless and gloomy as Evelyn's own sad thoughts.

The ancient domestics of the family began to whisper among themselves that never, in their remembrance, had such a melancholy day dawned on the nuptials of a De Clifford; and, according to the traditions of the house, would prove no good augury for the future happiness of the youthful bride.

We will not pause to describe scenes so often witnessed, and which differ so little in external circumstances, whether they bind those together whose hearts are far apart, or sanctify the solemn vows breathed by trusting and confiding spirits.

There was the usual concourse of friends and relatives, and the same festivities which always attend such an occurrence, whether it is destined to be the prelude of a life of happiness or of misery.

The bridal procession has entered the holy edifice: it is passing through the aisle, thronged with spectators who gaze with admiration on the fair young bride. Evelyn's cheek is pale as marble, but her demeanour composed and calm; in a moment more she is kneeling at the altar, so soon about to seal there, for ever, the engagement already so bitterly repented.

There, in a faltering voice, she spoke the vows by which she promised the love she could no longer bestow; and pledged herself to honour where she despised, and to obey one whose

commands were not likely to guide her in the performance of her duty.

Bewildered and confused, she seemed to wake as from a troubled dream; for as they passed through the porch of the church, her glance rested for an instant on the form of the old woman, and started back at the sight of one whom she deemed the messenger of woe.

But, much to her surprise, no unkind look met hers; though the words, breathed in a low and agitated whisper, reached her ear alone:—

"Your request is granted. I have prayed for you, for your heart is still kind and generous. And though the doom I foretold to you may not be averted, and though years of sorrow may be yours, yet you are young, and the future has still bright days in store for you."

Evelyn would fain have asked one question more, but the Duke hurried her on. As they entered their carriage many pressed round to gaze on them, and hid the old woman from their sight.

A few minutes more and Evelyn is once again within the home of her childhood, and sighed as she remembered that home, where she had known so much happiness, was hers no longer.

But there was little time for reflection; friends and acquaintances gathered round her, and she was still forced to repress her emotion, and to receive their congratulations on an event which all deemed so fortunate. Many envied Evelyn's lot that day; but could they have read the secret of what was passing in her heart, they would surely have repented their rash desire. A splendid *déjeûné* had been prepared for the select circle invited to partake of it; and, seated by the side of the Duke of Claremont, Evelyn was the object of universal attention.

The youthful Duchess felt relieved when this was over, and she retired to her own apartment, though not to find there, even for a moment, the solitude she so much needed. She was followed by a train of youthful bridemaids, all eager to assist at her toilette, and to examine once more, in closer inspection, the bridal dress and veil.

And now Lord de Clifford came to announce that the carriage had been ordered round which was to convey them as far as the station, where a special train was to be in readiness. They were to proceed by it to Claremont Castle, which was situated in one of the most beautiful parts of the north of England.

The impatience of the Duke to commence their journey was such, that he had positively refused to grant Evelyn's request of remaining a few hours longer with her family. This could easily have been accomplished, as the ordinary train only started at four. Self-willed and obstinate in trifles, he was determined to have his own way, and had ordered a special train at the early hour he chose to name.

He had been told that this would be attended with great danger, as it was almost impossible to have the road properly cleared at such an hour; but, careless of the risk he was making Evelyn incur, he persisted, and, by paying a large sum of money, succeeded in gaining his point. Lord and Lady de Clifford had in vain remonstrated; and it was only their ignorance of the extreme danger to which their daughter would be thus exposed that caused them to yield a reluctant consent to the wishes of the Duke.

We will not pause to describe this parting, so sorrowful to all interested in it. Evelyn embraced her parents, and could hardly tear herself away from the little Constance, who hung weeping round her neck; and then, in a faltering voice, asked and knelt to receive a father's blessing. It was given in solemn

and affectionate tones; and Evelyn, having again received the consoling assurance that in a short time she was to welcome her parents at Claremont, suffered herself to be led to the carriage, which rolled rapidly away amidst the cheers of the assembled spectators.

Chapter V.

The Duke and Duchess of Claremont are seated in a large and beautiful carriage in the special train, which is bearing them rapidly onward to the new and strange home of the youthful bride,—a home which she could but fear would seldom be cheered by the voice of kindness.

With a stern and altered manner he had watched her abandon herself to the violence of that grief which she could no longer control; and though he had at first endeavoured to soothe and comfort her, soon grew weary when he found that all his efforts were vain.

Without knowing it herself, hope had sustained her to the last hour; but now hope was over, and she felt as she had never done before. What a life of fruitless regret, of vain remorse, was before her! Her tears flowed fast as she thought of all this, and the Duke turned to reprove the excess of her grief. His words were cold, harsh, suspicious, mingled with unkind and bitter reproaches. Evelyn wept no more, and he read in her glance that sorrow had already turned to anger. A thousand vague feelings were awakened in her heart, which even she herself could hardly have analysed at that time. She afterwards remembered with a shudder that wild thoughts of hatred and revenge had floated before her; and who can tell, when such feelings are once awakened in the human heart, to what fearful results they might lead?

But Evelyn was spared, perhaps in mercy, the trial of a patience she had never learned to control.

There came a piercing cry of horror and of anguish, followed by a heavy shock—a crash—a wild feeling that death and danger were near, mingled with a confused sense of pain; and then the worst was over; all seemed darkness around, and Evelyn sank insensible.

* * * * *

When she opened her eyes she found herself in a room, which, though poorly furnished, was still clean and comfortable; but strangers alone watched by the couch where they had laid her. Bewildered and confused, it was only by degrees that the recollection of the terrible accident dawned on her memory.

In reply to her eager questions, those about her only answered that a collision of the trains had taken place, and that, together with some other sufferers, she had been carried to the nearest cottage. It was evident, however, that they wished to hide something from her; the truth flashed on her mind, and in an agitated tone she implored them to tell her if they knew anything concerning the Duke of Claremont. He had been much hurt, they answered, and was still insensible; medical aid, however, had been sent for, and they trusted all might yet be well. In the meantime, having learned the name of their guest, they had ventured to send a messenger to the Earl de Clifford, to acquaint them with the accident his daughter had met with.

Evelyn thanked them warmly, and felt relieved, for she could not doubt that her parents would hasten to join her. She then earnestly besought them to conduct her to the adjoining room, where the Duke of Claremont lay. With a look of pity they yielded to her request, hardly daring to impart to her the intelligence they had just received, that all hope was over.

Evelyn looked with a shudder on the pale and altered countenance of one who, a few moments before, had wakened such bitter feelings in her heart; and now anger had given way to sorrow and compassion for his sudden and unexpected fate.

Yet she trusted that there might still be hope; and fervent, indeed, were her prayers that a few more years might be granted to him to atone for the past.

Many were the resolutions she formed during the solitary hour she spent by the couch of the dying; and there did she solemnly vow to bear with patience all he might cause her to suffer, and sincerely to devote her life to the duties she had taken upon herself that day; and Hope whispered that surely her endeavours to touch the heart of her husband would not be vain.

A few brief moments had changed Evelyn's whole thought and purpose; and had taught her to bow, with an altered and humbled spirit, to the mysterious decrees of a merciful Providence.

But Evelyn's tears were not destined to prolong the fleeting span of life, though a momentary gleam of returning consciousness was granted, perhaps in answer to her prayers. He reared his head, and, for the first time, seemed aware of her presence; pressed her hand in his, and tried to speak: but the effort was too much for him. He sank back, and Evelyn's terrified glance told her that all was over.

The last rays of the setting sun imparted a faint and pallid lustre to that countenance which its morning beams had wakened to renewed life and vigour; and Evelyn, as she gazed on it, thought on the words of the old woman, and remembered that she had prophesied how that sun was to set on her bridal day.

But hurried footsteps are heard approaching, and the next moment Evelyn has rushed wildly forward to receive her parents.

We will not pause to describe the agitating scene that followed; suffice it to say, that Claremont Castle being only a few miles distant, it was deemed advisable to proceed thither at once.

Thus, an hour afterwards, a melancholy procession passed

through the triumphal arches erected to greet the bridal pair; and the merry peal which should have announced their arrival was changed into the mournful dirge, which, tolling over hill and valley, spoke alike of the vanity of human hopes and wishes, and of the death of the last heir to the noble house of Claremont.

A few days afterwards the service was read over the closing tomb in the presence of the Lord de Clifford, and the domestics and tenants of the estate, whose regrets were given far more to the extinction of a noble and generous house, of a name they had long revered and honoured, than to one who had proved himself so little worthy to bear it.

Chapter VI.

Five more years have passed away, and these years, though devoted to mourning and sorrow, had been better spent by Evelyn than any she had before known in the course of a short but ill-directed life. A severe illness, which followed the events we have just related, had given her ample time for reflection. She had profited by it, and had learned to appreciate, at their just value, all those gifts she had prized so highly before. This was fortunate for her future happiness; for the injuries she had also received in the fatal accident had, without endangering her life, totally destroyed what, at one time, she would have deemed more valuable than life itself. Evelyn was no longer beautiful when she arose from her couch of pain, but no one heard her breathe one sigh for an advantage she had so ill employed.

As soon as she was sufficiently recovered she had quitted Claremont Castle with her parents, and had never since revisited it; though, as the Duke had left no heir, all his vast domains had been placed by his will at her absolute disposal: but Evelyn now cared little for anything that wealth could give, and only rejoiced that it afforded her the opportunity of relieving those

dependent on her. Many on the Claremont estate had learned to bless their youthful mistress, though Evelyn felt herself unequal to yield to their solicitations to come among them once more.

Time passed away, and Evelyn's presence again cheered the family circle, though she had only recovered a very small portion of her former animation. None, however, could regret the change which had taken place in her whole demeanour. No longer haughty, cold, or proud, her presence seemed to diffuse sunshine wherever she went; and, from a changed and humbled heart, she daily offered up thanks for the mercy that had preserved her from danger and death, and thus taught her a lesson she never could forget.

Yet at times she could not help remembering Gerald de Vere, and longed to receive the assurance of his forgiveness. It was, however, with the most conflicting feelings that she heard that, after so long an absence, he had again returned to his native land.

But would he not rather seek than avoid an interview with her? and even if they met, would he not turn coldly away from one he had so much reason to blame?

This doubt was soon resolved. Gerald had not been ignorant of her history during the years they had been parted; and an impulse he could not resist urged him to behold again one in whose fate he still felt so deep an interest.

Gerald and Evelyn met; and as the latter saw him gaze earnestly on her altered countenance, for the first time thought with a pang of the change that had taken place there. But Gerald looked with pleasure on the kindly smile that now animated it, and never thought of regretting the beauty it had lost.

Day after day he lingered by her side; till at last, each remaining doubt dispelled by the change he saw with so much pleasure, he once more sought to unite her fate with his.

Evelyn at first hesitated to accept of an happiness she had so little deserved; but we need hardly say that the constancy and affection of Gerald overcame each remaining scruple, and soon another bridal day dawned under fairer auspices than the former. There was, it is true, less of outward pomp and festivity about it; but the day which united for ever hearts which the world had so long separated, might well be deemed by Gerald and Evelyn the brightest of their lives.

Evelyn had yielded to the entreaties which urged her, on this happy occasion, to revisit Claremont Castle, for she felt it her duty to reside on her own property. Our readers may well imagine that this time it was no *special train* that conveyed the proprietors of Claremont to their new abode; and surely we need hardly describe the enthusiastic reception that awaited them there, or how many thronged round to obtain the first glance of Lady Evelyn de Vere: for she had now laid aside for ever the title of Duchess of Claremont, which could only awaken such gloomy recollections.

We will only add, that none were ever heard to regret the accident which had deprived them so suddenly of a harsh and cruel master, and placed over them those far more calculated to render them happy.

Would you know yet more of Gerald and Evelyn?

At Claremont Castle you will still find its noble owners, ever faithfully discharging the duties of their high station, and still blest with all that true affection can bestow. Bright and promising children have grown up around them to repay, by their care and attention, the love that had watched over their infancy; and though sorrow may at times have clouded the sunshine of their lot, yet Gerald and Evelyn de Vere have always preserved a cheerful and contented spirit, and have ever thankfully acknowledged that they have, indeed, known much of happiness in life.

TO A DEPARTED POETESS.

BY MRS. W. P. O'NEILL.

Thy graceful numbers bear me oft in dreams
To fairy-haunted nooks, where singing streams
Beneath tall reeds and quivering lilies creep;
Or forth in silv'ry brightness laugh and leap
Through em'rald meadows, where no shadows rest
To mar the clearness of the water's breast.
Thy luring genius leads
My willing steps to sweet sequestered glades,
Where primrose banks drink dew from summer skies,
And beauty from the world of wealth that lies
In summer's smile.
I sit with thee beneath the grateful shade,
By twisted beech and broad-leav'd laurel made;
I hear the cuckoo's heart-reviving note,
While odours of young violets round me float;
I watch the glist'ning of the sunny sea—
Its heavings full of solemn harmony—
I listen to thy gentle voice and sage,
Reading bright lessons from bright Nature's page.
Oh, Poetess! we sorrow that thy sun
Hath early set! But Heaven's will be done!
We may not murmur, for we know 't was best
That thou should'st "flee away and be at rest!"

THE DREAM-TESTIMONY OF ORA MAY.

BY CALDER CAMPBELL.

The moaning wind among the woods
  Told of the coming rain,
And, sobbing, left a shade that broods
  In darkness o'er the plain;
Athwart the sky clouds hurtled by,
  With mist-wreaths in their train.

The streamlet, sent from distant hills,
  Wailed like a whimpering child;—
With hoot, the timid heart that thrills,
  The owl wheeled fast and wild,—
It saw the form of coming storm,
  Where late such quiet smiled!

The lark had left its skyey choir,
  Red fogs the sun did veil,—
Flashed from their depths sharp tongues of fire,
  While thunder's voice did hail
The startled deer, that crouched with fear
  Where forest flowers waxed pale.

The storm hath come—the flood descends!
  The warnings all were true!
And thus a mystic feeling lends
  Omens to creatures, too,
That shows the darkness ere it ends,
  The brightness in one view.

I sat within my summer bower,
  All bright and sweet with flowers—
I sang the song that oft had power
  To cheer me in dull hours,
When human cares kept *him* away
  From that fair home of ours;

But still, though absent through long days,
  The evening brought him back:
And now I watched the sunset rays
  That kissed the woodland track,
O'er which, on high, far in the sky,
  Flitted the fleeting rack.

All things to me an aspect took
  Of fanciful and fair,
Sweet flowers spoke faylike at my side—
  Sylphs gambolled in the air:
I heard no tones save gentle ones—
  Save beauty everywhere.

I looked on the broad agaric
  Below the stalwart oak,
And thought each orange-purpled streak
  That on its surface broke,
Made it a table, richly decked,
  To banquet fairy-folk.

I looked upon the aspen leaves
  That quivered in the air,
And Fancy—which so often gives
  A dazzling beauty where
It fixes—made them seem to me
  Gay dancers dancing there.

H [illegible]

Alfred T. Heath

London, Published for the Proprietor by David Bogue, Fleet Street
October 1, 1853.

A graceful rose-bush flourished near—
  Oh, a flush of blossoms bore it!
And Hope—like them—came without fear,
  Chasing each doubt before it:—
So the shadows run before the sun
  When a cloud is scudding o'er it!

Said I, "The stormy stour hath passed,
  And with it from my mind
The shadows strange that, thick and fast,
  Like sea-birds in the wind,
Around me came till all my frame
  Nought but unrest could find!

I'll sing the song my husband loves—
  The sounds his ear may reach!"
I tried to sing, but all in vain!
  False Memory failed to teach
The words conned o'er so oft before—
  I wanted tune and speech!

"A new song let me frame," I said.
  "Beloved," I began,
"Love alters not though life be dead:
I love thee, though thy hands are red,
For steel loves blood as the grass loves dew.
Lo! it has stained thee through and through,
  Where from the heart it ran!"

I stopped—I shivered—What had put
  Those words within lip-range?
I ne'er before had conned them o'er,
  And now what direful change
Of sense had made a dirge so sad
  Gush out with madness strange?

A prophet-horror filled my soul
With anguish stern and strong;
Oh, what could urge that witch-like dirge
From my lips, to bode of wrong?—
As a mother of Thrace o'er her newborn babe
Wept I over my new song!

The twilight ended as I sat
Beneath the arbour eaves;
The night-rack, whirling through the sky,
Bound up white clouds in sheaves;
The wind swept by, like the rustle nigh
Of a snake through withered leaves.

Men sometimes dream who do not sleep,—
I slept not!—Did I dream?
I know not: but a drama deep
I saw, as in a stream
One looks and sees grim mysteries
Glower through the wan moonbeam!

I saw a wood, where wood was none,—
A dell, unknown before;
I saw a traveller, all alone—
I knew the cloak he wore;
I saw a deed of horror done
'Mid the tempest's shrilly roar!

I knew my husband's rival there
In my husband's assassin;
But I could not speak, for I felt the air
Stifle me, mouth and chin . . . .
And the murderer fled, while I saw *him* dead
Who my heart and hand did win!

I heard a wail, but knew not whence
  The solemn accents brake;
I heard the dead turn in their graves
  By the noise their bones did make;
And I shrieked so loud that the vision fled,
  And I sat there wide awake!

Awake,—but through the night-dewed trees
  Flashed torches, red and bright,
And on came heavy steps, and knees
  That trembled up the height
That led to where, all quivering there,
  I stared with doubting sight.

A dismal throng, that bore along
  A rude and bowery bier!
Upon it lay in moonshine grey
  My husband, brave and dear!
No word was said, yet I knew he was dead,
  Though I could not shed a tear!

Blood-dabbled were his cloak and vest,
  Blood-clottered was his side;
The curdling flood still from his vest
  Flow'd forth in stately pride;
But he was dead, and (as they said)
  By murder had he died!

Out then spake I, accusing loud
  The man who did the deed,
Which I had seen in woodland green
  Where the grass seemed yet to bleed:
But the wondering crowd, with voices loud,
  Cared not to hear or heed.

Or, if they listened, one and all
  Turned pitying away
With whispers sad . . . "Alack! she's mad!"
  "Leave her to weep, and pray!"
And I wept and prayed for Jesu's aid,
  And it came after many a day!

I even learnt to pray for him
  Whose hand had widowed me;
And, lo! as Morning from the dim
  Of Night lights up the sea,
A ray from heaven to me was given
  That brought serenity!

One day—not long ago—was brought
  A stranger to my gate,
Whose steed, by cruel treatment wrought
  To fury desperate,
Had flung him down against a stone,
  Half dead, in wounded state.

Though many years had passed, I knew
  That face, whence eyes looked out
That scanned me, too, with gaze which grew
  Wilder, as throng'd about
His weary bed, men, who then said
  His death was past all doubt.

Then in the pangs of fierce remorse
  He made confession. He
It was who left that grisly corse
  Which I in woods did see:
Awake, or in a dream, I saw
  The thing that was to be.

Say not that such things cannot pass
  Because thou hast not proved them:
Shadows have streamed across yon glass,
  And God may have removed them,
Lest at the sight men should take fright,
  And doubt if e'er *He* loved them!

We cannot tell His purposes,
  Nor why the cloud He scatters
That hides the ill none can conceal
  From Him! It little matters
How Justice with its sudden hand
  Crime's iron network shatters!

THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE.

BY MRS. W. H. COATES (LATE ELIZABETH YOUATT).

THERE is an angel with us in the house,
God giv'n,— or lent, it may be, for awhile,
To cheer us with his presence and his smile:

A little child, whom we have callèd Willie.
Morning and eve, at pray'r-time, he will lie
With folded hands and upward-glancing eye:

While ever and anon a sound is heard,
Just as if he too were softly praying;
And God, perchance, knows what he is saying.

There is an angel with us in the house;
Oh, wondrous love! oh, happiness profound!
Since he has come the place seems holy ground.

Our songs are turned to hymns, our fears to hopes;
And though in this world trials shall never cease,
We look on that sweet face, and all is peace.

Take him not home so soon, O blessèd Lord!
Our child — our little child — our only one!
And yet Thou knowest best,—Thy will be done!

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

BY LOUISA COURTENAY PEACH.

CHRISTMAS! Christmas! merry Christmas!
Welcome, welcome once again!
Sisters, brothers, join your voices,
Sing a merry Christmas strain!
Brightly shines the cheerful holly,
While the Christmas candles glow,
Laurestine and laurel mingle
With the *tempting* mistletoe.
Cluster round the crackling embers,
Frank, and all the joyous lot!
Dear old customs, how I love ye!
May ye never be forgot!
Christmas, etc.

Time may bring unlooked-for changes,
Months and years will roll away,
We may not another Christmas
Meet to sing our simple lay.
Whatsoe'er shall now betide us,
If through distant lands we roam,
What in spirit can divide us,
Or destroy the thoughts of home?
May we feel a father's blessing,
May a mother seem to smile,
And a well-known hand caressing,
Smooth our placid brow the while.
Christmas, etc.

INNER LIFE.

BY MRS. HENRY THOMPSON.

THOUGHTS and feelings manifold
Wander through the heart untold;
Changing, changing, who may find them,
Who may fathom, who may bind them?
Light and shade together lying,
Were they only born for dying?

Through the weak, yet earnest heart,
Living in its world apart,
Hourly through its silence stealing,
Flows the stream of thought and feeling;
Holy wishes, self-denying,
Yearning love,—can these feel dying?

Seeking, striving, day by day,
Turning from its dreams away,
Lest their too-seducing beauty
Dull the aching sense of duty,
Melt the soul with their sweet sighing:
Thoughts like these,—can these feel dying?

Yet through the weary march of life,
Battle-field and lonely strife,
Shrinking even from a flower,
Lest it gain too deep a power;
Crushing many a human feeling,
Lest it fill the heart, concealing
The cold path before us lying,—
Inner life is daily dying.

Courage! onward to thy rest!
Grieve not, if within thy breast
Safer in thy silent keeping,
Deep and tender thoughts lie sleeping.
Grieve not, for they yet shall waken
In the land whence they were taken;
In the eternal sunlight lying,
All too beautiful for dying.

Rectory, Wrington,
September 1853.

LA BLONDE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF PIERRE DUPONT.

BY M. A. POWER.

Dream of a landscape pale,
  Of heather and birches light,
Whose silvery leaves on the passing wind
  Float like foam on the surges white;
And beneath their flickering shade
  A graceful form behold,
More fair and slight than the birches white,—
  The virgin with locks of gold.

Day and night, all pale and fair,
  She roams the woodland bowers;
Child beloved of the earth and sky,
  Sister of stars and flowers!

All gaze as she passes by,
  All praise her near and far;
Break the guitar and the sounding lyre,
  The wild woods her minstrels are!
The beast from its den looks forth,
  The birds from their downy nests,
And river and lake, for her sweet sake,
  As mirrors, spread forth their breasts.

Day and night, all pale and fair,
She roams the woodland bowers;
Child beloved of the earth and sky,
Sister of stars and flowers!

They say that with the stars
She communes, when the night wind blows;
Some whisper a tale of mysterious love,
But her lover no one knows.
Ah, it is not beneath the boughs
Of the fir-trees and birchen groves,—
Their feathery shade was never made
To harbour her earthly loves!

Day and night, all pale and fair,
She roams the woodland bowers;
Child beloved of the earth and sky,
Sister of stars and flowers!

She loves 'neath the mystic shade
Of the heaven's golden palms;
Far from the mortal world her soul
Dissolves in the voice of psalms!
Angel! a woman thou art;
Ere called to thy home above,
Among mankind one soul thou may'st find
To love thee, and merit thy love!

Day and night, all pale and fair,
She roams the woodland bowers;
Child beloved of the earth and sky,
Sister of stars and flowers!

A LEGEND.

BY P*.

Hark! it is midnight's dreary hour,
And from yon dark deserted tow'r
  The death-bell smites the ear;
Now loud it swells upon the blast,
And now it murmurs faintly past,
  Thrilling the soul with fear.

'T is awful, 'mid the hush profound,
To hear the drear and boding sound
  Of that unearthly bell!
Hark! hear you not that piercing cry,
That groan of mortal agony,
  That mingles with the knell?

The legend tells, that years ago
A knight, to all his kind a foe,
  Within that tower dwelt;
A cruel man, a man of blood—
No tale of woe, no thought of good,
  His savage heart could melt.

The night was dark, the wind was loud,
The moon obscured by many a cloud
That flitted o'er the sky;
And now the thunder 'gins to roar,
The white waves lash the rocky shore,
The lightning gleams on high!

But, hark! amid the tempest's roar
A voice without the castle door
Cries feebly for relief.
Sir Harold heard the sad appeal;
But his stern heart had ceased to feel,
Or care for others' grief.

"I will not ope my castle door,
Though king or noble should implore
A shelter for his head!
Heed not the wretch!" he sternly cries;
"I care not if he lives or dies,
The earth shall be his bed!"

Next morn the sun shone bright and warm,
Still were the waves and hushed the storm,
The winds were all at rest;
But why upon Sir Harold's brow
Appears that cloud? Dark thoughts, I trow,
Are warring in his breast.

And he hath left his lofty tow'r,
And wanders by the rocky shore
In silence and alone.
Sudden he stops; fear and amaze
Are painted in his frenzied gaze,
His limbs seem turned to stone!

For, lo! before his straining eyes
Displayed, a dreary corse there lies,
  Outstretched upon the rock!
One glance upon the upturned face
He gave, one cry to Heaven for grace,
Then sunk beneath the shock!

For that short glance sufficed to trace
The image of a once-loved face—
  The features of—his son!
He who had been his hope, his joy,
His lost, though unforgotten boy—
  His child, his only one!

And 't was his voice the night before
That prayed for shelter at the door
  Of his stern father's tow'r!
And when unheeded was his cry,
Forlorn he laid him down to die
  Upon the sea-beat shore.

And ever since, the legends tell,
At midnight sounds that solemn bell
  Ere fiercest tempests roar;
And when the sailor hears it toll,
He breathes a prayer for the youth's soul
  Who died on that lone shore.

London: — Printed by G. Barclay, Castle St. Leicester Sq.

LEIGHTON
SON &
HODGE,
SHOE LANE
LONDON.

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LEIGHTON
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The Keepsake